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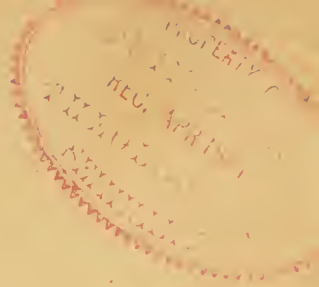
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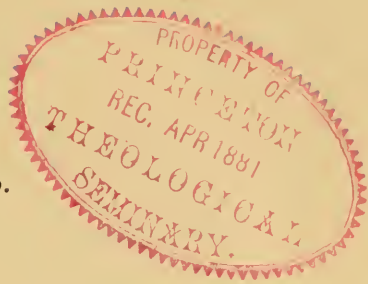
THOUGHTS
ON
MATERIALISM:
AND ON
RELIGIOUS FESTIVALS,
AND
SABBATHS.

BY
HENRY BRADSHAW FEARON.

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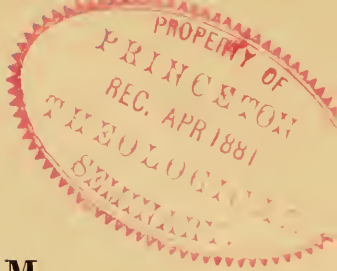
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MATERIALISM

A SCRIPTURAL DOCTRINE.



CHAPTER I.

HISTORICAL SKETCH OF IMMATERIALISM.

WHETHER man shall, or shall not, live again, is a question in the solution of which may be said to be involved the very highest considerations; and from Pherecydes downwards, the philosophers in common with the multitude have borne testimony to the strong hold which the inquiry has, and from man's nature and circumstances is calculated to have, upon the human mind and character.

The advocates for immortality may be divided into four classes. The believer in futurity, without other than human authority, by means of a presumed immaterial, and immortal spirit;—the believer in futurity, not because of the existence of an immaterial principle, but of a communication of the fact by Divine authority;—the believer in futurity, who amalgamates the speculations of the former with the faith of the latter;—and the rejector of each of the above systems, whose belief is founded upon the assumed common consent of mankind, as to the *desire* for future life, and the undoubted power of the Creator of man to confer the same. To estimate

the evidence upon which these systems are asserted, the following pages will be devoted ; but with the especial object of advocating the Scriptural doctrines upon the subject, which may justly be deemed to teach the *materiality* of man, and the doctrine of the Resurrection from the Dead, as based thereon.

The hypothesis of the soul's immortality being, even by the mass of defenders of Revelation, held as descriptive of the resurrection from the dead, much confusion of ideas as well as of phraseology has become current in this controversy. Thus it is popularly taught, that Materialism is practically a convertible term with that of Atheism, and that to deny the immortality of the soul is to deny a future state of existence !*

The history of the doctrine of the immortality of the soul is a history of the weakness and the ignorance of man ; and it affords the strongest evidence of the absolute *necessity*, upon the subject of future existence, for an express Divine communication, to lead even the philosopher from his wild and contradictory speculations, and from his wanderings in the mental valley of the shadow of death, to a knowledge of the fact—"that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life : and that he will raise him up at the last day †." But in the eye of the Immaterialist, this simple declaration, devoid as it is of all scholastic mystery, has no charms ; although, when he recurs to his modern authorities, he may discover

* "Materialism is a word that has two different significations : one class of materialists maintain that there is no Creator, and that matter has always existed ; another class teach a Creator, but maintain that man does not consist of two different entities, body and soul, and that all phænomena attributed to the soul, results from forms and combinations of matter."—*Spurzheim's Philosophical Principles of Phrenology*, p. 100.

† JOHN vi. 40.

that they are at cross purposes, if not with themselves, yet they are so with their precursors; and that even the heathen Fathers in the immaterial Church proposed subtleties the most irreconcilable with each other; though, as it should seem, naturally enough originating in the speculative powers of the human mind, when engaged upon viewing man's nature, his apparent destiny, and the gloomy contemplation of a possible extinction of Being.

Death being seen to end our mortal existence, the design was at least a benevolent one, which should labour to discover the means to master this event. And thus efforts—originating in periods of mental darkness, and suited to the quackery of the Schools, to the cravings and the ignorance of man, and to the selfish interest of the Philosophers as well as of the Priests,—became, and still continue to be, formidable from authority, and powerfully operative from age. But the history of our species forces the conclusion, that all speculations upon man's condition and future hopes, when not derived from Revelation, have been wild, extravagant, and generally immoral,—giving a sanction to practices tending to debase our nature, and to sink men to a low degree of ignorance and consequently of depravity.

The Indians, the Chaldæans, and the Ægyptians—but more generally the latter—are supposed to have originated, not the immaterialism of modern times, but that to which the theory is mainly indebted. The Ægyptians maintained that the soul of man is immortal; that when the body dies, it enters into that of some other animal; and that when it has transmigrated through all terrestrial, marine, and flying animals, it returns to the body of a man again. The funeral rites of the Egyptians are supposed to have aided their speculations, as they embalmed their dead bodies, which they deposited in subterranean grottos,

where they were supposed to live thousands of years. The Persians, according to the oracles of Zoroaster, believed that all souls were produced from one fire, and therefore partook of the nature of the element from which they sprung. The Chinese consider the soul to be air,—to be material, but highly rarefied.

The Stoics taught that the soul was a hot fiery blast : other sects of heathen philosophers, a hot complexion. Others held that it was the harmony of the four elements. Democritus contended that the soul was made up of round atoms, incorporated by air and fire. Some believed that the soul was aërial ; some, that it was earthy. Xenophon held that it was both watery and earthy. According to some of the Greeks, the soul of the universe was a vapour, or exhalation from the moist elements ;—so the souls from animals were vapours from their own bodies. Of those among them who considered the soul incorporeal, some asserted that it was a substance, and immortal ; whilst others believed that it was neither. Thales taught that it was always in motion, and itself the origin of that motion. Pythagoras contended that it was a self-moving monad, or number. Plato, that it was a substance conceivable only by the understanding, and moving according to harmony and number. Aristotle, that it was the first continual motion of a body natural, having in it those instrumental parts wherein was possibility of life. The Manichæans taught that there is but one universal soul, which is distributed, in portions, to all bodies. Plato believed in the existence of this universal soul, and supposed that all things lived by its influence ; but that those only were living creatures that had separate souls : and it was held by some of the Greeks and others, that man was composed of *three* parts ; his body being derived from the earth—his soul from the moon—his spirit from

the sun ; and that, after death, each of these returned to its proper origin. Even Pythagoras and Plato taught that there were two souls ; one of a celestial nature, or the rational soul,—the other the material soul, being the seat of the passions ; and that *both* these souls were united to the body. Whilst Aristotle taught that there were three souls ; all distinct, as to essence and substantiality, yet in one body : viz. a rational, a vegetative, and a sensitive soul ; two of which act, before the rational soul is induced into the body ; and, after that event has taken place, then those two cease to act at all.

In Stanley's *Lives of the Ancient Philosophers*, souls are placed in the next rank to dæmons, but under three classes :—first, souls separate from matter, called super-celestial intelligences ; secondly, souls inseparable from matter ; thirdly, rational souls of a middle kind, immaterial, incorporeal, and consequently immortal, having a self-generate and self-animate existence, proceeding from the paternal mind, seated in the moon, and sent down to the earth, in obedience to the will of the Father. It is added, That the soul of man will clasp God to herself ; that the paternal mind soweth symbols in the soul, and the soul being a bright fire, by the power of the Father remaineth immortal, and is mistress of life.

The PRE-EXISTENCE OF SOULS, and their transmigration, form prominent features in these several speculations ; but, in relation to transmigration, great variety of explanation is offered. Some believed in only one species of soul, making it to pass indiscriminately into the bodies of plants and animals ; others in two ; and others, as many as there are species of animals. Jamblicus confined his view of transmigration to those of the same species, contending that every soul had a species of structure exactly suited to its own faculties. To each of the three classes

Plato has assigned a separate residence;—affixing the first in the belly, the second in the chest, the third in the head. Some considered that the soul, after its separation from the body, remained without one. Others assigned to it a body, and sent it to the clouds,—to the stars,—to some happier region; and some, to the bowels of the earth. Most (like our modern immaterialists) taught that the body was a prison; and that the soul, while placed in it, was surrounded with darkness, and shut up as in a dungeon; whilst, on the contrary, others held that souls were remarkably anxious to occupy an earthly tenement. According to Virgil and other authorities, only a few souls retained possession of Elysium;—the rest returned into mortal bodies, after a thousand years; but, before they revisited the upper regions, they were compelled to drink of the waters of Lethe; an oblivion of former impressions being deemed necessary, for the purpose of preventing their repining, because of the extent to which their fiery energy and celestial origin were to be again shackled and obscured, when they should be encumbered with bodies that were noxious and vile. Sallust asserts, that were it not for these transmigrations, the Deity would be under the necessity of creating a soul for every new body; and that, as in time this number would be infinite, they could not be contained within a finite world. The rational souls, he states, never migrate into the bodies of irrational animals, but follow those irrational bodies, as dæmons who possess or attend upon men. Some indeed imagined, that the soul, at last, after wearing out a number of bodies, would, in time, wear out itself, and perish for ever.

Thus, without attempting to characterize the wisdom, or the folly, of such speculations, it will be apparent that these learned heathens, these philosophers,—to dissent from whom subjects us to the wrath of professed believers

in this world, and to threats of eternal damnation in the next,—ascribe to the soul hardly one quality in common with each other; the whole tending to prove that the Book of Nature, however suited for study, has afforded but indifferent instruction, when not associated with, and directed by, Divine Revelation. This consideration naturally leads us to the inquiry, Why and how has it occurred, when man was favoured with Divine instruction, that these heathen absurdities should, so far from being destroyed by the light of Revelation, become actually incorporated with its truths; and be even now held, by the great body of professed believers, as necessary to faith in its doctrines, and essential to a participation in its hopes? This inquiry will, perhaps, be best answered by a reference to the rational and simple grounds upon which Jesus and the Apostles promulgated their divinely authorized doctrine of a future life. What they taught they were *commissioned* by God to proclaim; and, without occupying themselves with philosophizing upon the component parts of our frame, they viewed man as he was,—a thinking and a responsible being, who had been called into existence by the power of God, and who would be raised from a state of death by the same power; and by this means, and this means alone, receive a continuation of existence. This mode of simplifying the conceptions of futurity was too humble for the philosopher, too enlightened for the priest, and too rational for the mass of society;—the very fact of a crucified man having been the promulgator of such a doctrine was a stumbling-block to many; and the Resurrection from the dead was even held to be the teaching of a strange God, and laughed at, by the philosophers of Athens.

There is reason to infer from the writings of the Apostles, that, even during their lives, the leaven of

heathenism had evinced its influence; for there were among the believers to whom they wrote, those who had, by philosophy and vain deceit, laboured to beguile them with enticing words of man's wisdom, to the worshipping of spirits and angels and dæmons, giving heed to fables, rather than to godly edifying.

Speedily after this period, a race of men arose, claiming to be the successors of the Apostles, who added thousands of professors to the faith, but at the lamentable sacrifice of the principles of Revelation. The Greek philosophers now became the disciples of Jesus, and succeeded in effecting the unholy union of the assurance of a resurrection from the dead and a future judgement, with the heathen doctrines before recited,—doctrines admirably suited to the art and to the cupidity of the Catholic Church; a church which, in after ages, added a third to the two established receptacles for immortal souls, appointing it as a temporary place of residence, where some were purged (hence Purgatory) by fire; and out of which a soul could not be delivered till after the expiration of a considerable time, or, of that which was of more importance, a satisfaction to the priest for his prayers in its behalf*:—a tenet this purely of heathen origin, and adopted with most religious punctuality: for, as among the Greeks it was usual to put a piece of money into the mouths of the dead, for the purpose of paying Charon to transport their souls over the

* “Thomas Aquinas makes the pains of purgatory to be as violent as those of hell. The Rhemists say that souls are not in a bad condition. Durandus gives them some intermission from their pains on Sundays and holidays.”—*Priestley's Early Opinions*, vol. i. p. 419.

Gregory the Great (*Dial.* lib. 4.), says that God has created three kinds of vital spirits: that of angels, which is not clothed with flesh; that of men, which is clothed with flesh but does not die with the flesh; and that of brute animals, which is clothed with the flesh, and dies with it. He states that before the restoration of the body the souls of

Styx to the Elysian fields, so the Catholics placed a silver coin in the mouths of their dead, to pay Peter for opening the gates of heaven. The heathens taught also, that the souls of the deceased wandered about the universe until they arrived at the river Styx, thence to be transferred to the Elysian fields : and the Catholics, imitating their tutors, asserted that all souls wandered about the earth until their arrival in purgatory.

Ghosts, too, when once tainted, were required to be purified by brimstone ; as without this the bodies into which they were designed to migrate would be of a more degraded character. These operations, so suited to active, but so burthensome to sluggish souls, are happily rendered by Dryden :

“What feels the body when the soul expires—
By time corrupted, or consumed by fires?
Nor dies the spirit, but new life repeats
In other forms—and only changes seats :

Then death, so call'd, is but old matter drest
In some new figure, and a varied vest.
Thus all things are but alter'd—nothing dies;
And here and there the unbodied spirit flies,
By time, or force, or sickness dispossesst,
And lodges, where it lights, in man or beast;

The immortal soul flies out in empty space,
To seek her fortune in some other place.”—*Ovid's Metam.* b. xv.

The Fathers, borrowing their views from paganism, *some* of the righteous, but not of *all* of them, are received into heaven. To the question, in what manner the corporeal fire of hell can lay hold on the incorporeal soul, he replies, If the incorporeal spirit is held in the body of the living man, why after death should it not be held in corporeal fire? And for further satisfaction he relates, among various other instances equally conclusive, that a holy man in the island of Lipari saw the soul of Theoderic the Arian thrown by the deceased Pope John and Symmachus the patrician into the crater of the volcano, on the very day on which those to whom he told it found on their return to Italy that he had died.

taught doctrines respecting the soul's immortality often differing from each other, and all in an equal degree opposed to Revelation. Tertullian held, that the soul of Jesus at his death descended to those of the patriarchs, and that the soul of Adam came from God. The Church, in the days of Origen, had not determined whether the soul was eternal, or created for a certain time; whether it was the cause of life, or was merely confined in the body as a punishment for previous transgressions. Origen taught, that all souls had existed from all eternity, and were imprisoned in the body as a punishment for their sins; and from his days to the present, under some mode of explanation or other, the immateriality and immortality of the mental powers have been most singularly held by most sects of believers, in common with the deistical and atheistical philosophers.

Amongst the moderns, inconsistencies of opinion have hardly been less marked. Thus Digby, in defining the qualities of the soul, says, "that it is able to move and to work without being moved or touched; that it is in no place, and yet not absent from any place; that it is also not in time and not subject to it,—for though it does consist with time, and is while time is, it is not in time."

Watts states, that there are two immaterial principles, or souls; one for life, the other for thought and agency.

Lord Bacon, whilst some of his views would lead to an adoption of the materiality of man, endeavours to draw a distinction between inspired and sensitive souls.

Hartley ably shows that man may be material: yet afterwards, as if alarmed at his discovery, shrinks back upon the heathen hypothesis; asserting,—and that too after having explained much of the phænomenon of life *without* the agency of any distinct immaterial principle,—that man consists of two parts; one of which is that substance,

agent, or principle, to which we refer our sensations and voluntary motions: and that the thinking powers proceed from what he mystically terms, the infinitesimal elementary body.

Dr. Price (the most able of the modern immaterialists) propounds his creed as consisting of four parts; yet those parts would almost class him amongst his adversaries:—he states, First, “That I am a being or substance, and not a mere configuration of parts.” Secondly, “That I am one being, and not many.” Thirdly, “That I am a voluntary agent.” Fourthly, “That my senses and limbs—my eyes, hands, &c.—are instruments by which I act, and not myself; or mine, and not me.”

Locke (who upon this subject may perhaps be viewed as halting between two opinions) maintains that we have spiritual parts, but that they are “capable of motion;” and that created “souls are not totally separated from matter, because they are both active and passive; and those beings that are both active and passive partake of both matter and spirit.”

Mr. Rennell* dissents from many of his predecessors, by admitting the possible *extinction* of the soul, and also by consenting to confer immortality upon brutes. The sources of life he describes as being composed of three parts;—vegetation, volition, and the life of the understanding. Whilst most immaterialists had agreed that the soul of man is rational, immaterial, and immortal, and that it possesses no qualities in common with the body: yet Mr. Rennell, an alarmist and a zealous advocate for immaterialism, has made two admissions, either of which would appear as tending to assimilate his system to those “dangerous errors” which he vouchsafes to re-

* *Remarks on Scepticism*, by the Rev. Thomas Rennell, B. D. Christian Advocate of Cambridge: 1823.

fute. First, he allows that brutes, in common with men, may have immortal souls: and secondly, that the inherently *immortal* principle may become extinct; for “the thinking principle is essentially indivisible, but if it cannot be decomposed it may perhaps be *finally extinguished*.” Upon the first position let us ask, how the sloth and the oyster are to be disposed of in a future state, and will their souls inherit a consciousness of their previous existence? Is the immortal soul of the ox or the ass, as well as that of their owner, a part of the Divine essence? Are such immortal souls to be the companions of the “Christian Advocate” in a future state of existence; and each, at the Judgement of the great day, appointed to their appropriate situations? And finally, Are there to be discovered in the writings of even any unbeliever, views in an equal degree “*dangerous*” to the doctrines of Revelation, with those which in this instance are so oracularly propounded?

“The sum (says Priestley, as to the united action of matter and spirit,) of the argument from the Scriptures, comes in aid of the arguments from reason and the nature of things, which show the utter incapacity of any connection between substances (or qualities,) so totally foreign to each other as the *material* and *immaterial* principles are always described to be,—having no common property whatever, and therefore incapable of all mutual action. Let the immaterial principle be defined in whatever manner it is possible to define it, the supposition of it explains no one phænomenon in nature; there being no more connection between the powers of thought and an immaterial principle, than between the same powers and a material principle.”*

Thus far I have chiefly confined myself to a mere sketch of the doctrine of Immaterialism, its incorporation with

* *Priestley's Early Opinions*, vol. i. p. 402.

Revealed truth, and the explanations of its supporters; reserving for the succeeding chapters the much-controverted points relative to the cause or causes of life, and of the rational powers of the human mind. And whilst I deem immaterialism under every form, as alike unsupported by reason and opposed to revelation, I admit the difficulties which a materialist in common with his adversaries must ever find, when investigating the organization and the thinking powers of man. These difficulties, however, press equally in principle, if not in degree, when the organization and the mind too of the monkey or the elephant are contemplated: and we may justly take exception to the Advocates, who, after conceding powers beyond their understanding to the very "matter" whose properties they had been decrying, would announce their alarms, their piety, and their orthodoxy, only at a particular modification of matter: Whilst some content themselves with denying, "That medullary matter thinks*;" and yet follow up this oracular announcement by infusing into the fly and the oyster spiritual essences. Yet we might ask such writers, who are thus impiously bold in circumscribing the modifications of matter even when directed by Infinite skill and contrivance, Where is the point at which the spiritual immortal being is discovered to be necessary? Is it at the first production of the egg, or at the moment of its departure from the shell? If at the former, How many "immortal souls" have they waylaid at their breakfast-tables since they were appointed to suppress "dangerous errors"? If at the latter, What gives life to the sluggish, inert, "medullary" matter, previous to the breaking of the shell? And, in regard to man, Where is the spirit rendered indispensable? Is it in the sensibility of a nerve,—the voluntary movement of

* See *Rennell*.

a limb,—from thence to the exertion of any one faculty of the mind? When and where was this spirit created? Where was its residence before the formation of the body to which it gives life and thought? At what period, and how, did it enter into and animate the body? Does it grow with the body's growth, and strengthen with its strength? or is it unprogressive in its nature? How is it affected by sleep—by dreaming—by bodily wounds—by insanity—by swooning? * And by what deductions of reason or of philosophy can such writers explain the *union* in one being of “two principles, distinct from, and possessed of no property in common with, each other?” thus *reversing* the principles of Newton †, by admitting more causes than are sufficient to explain appearances, and by assigning similar effects to dissimilar causes.

* See *Lectures on Physiology, Zoology, &c.* by W. Lawrence, F.R.S.

† *Principia*.

*The question is here argued not from reason but from the
contradictions of writers — this is not doing the subject justice.*

CHAPTER II.

ORGANIZATION.

IF it can be shown that life and that mind are not inconsistent with organization, this important controversy will thereby be much narrowed. And in committing myself to the affirmative, I am aided by an authority before quoted, who, perceiving that in this discussion a middle course could not be pursued, has boldly made the avowal,—that “*if the point of life being dependent upon organization be once admitted, the immortality of the soul, and everything which distinguishes man from the grass on which he treads, is utterly annihilated**.” In receiving this concession with perfect satisfaction, let it be made the starting-post of the argument: and if it can be shown that “life and mind may be dependent upon organization,” may we not say to the reverend immaterialist, that the doctrine of the soul’s immortality will thereby be “annihilated.”

Let us adhere to Newton’s principles,—that to every effect there must be a cause, but that that cause must be an adequate one; and that when such is discovered, causes are not to be multiplied. We look at man, of whom we read in the Scriptures that he is made of the dust of the earth;—that his Creator producing respiration by breathing “*into him the breath of life,*” and thus imparting motion to his lungs, he became a living soul or person.

We observe man at his birth, and during the first months

* *Rennell*, page 89.

of his existence,—and we perceive the first faint dawns of his mind; that they are as weak and infantile as the body. As the senses acquire their power, the mind gradually strengthens, and advances with the body from childhood to puberty, and becomes adult when the development of the frame is completed*. When the organization advances, then the mind, as it regards its vigour and its natural powers, advances also. We observe this machine in infancy—in manhood—in second childhood; we see its thinking powers grow, mature, and decay—with the growth, the maturity, and the decay of the organization. We see the affections of the mind influencing and controlling the actions of the body; and we observe, on the other hand, the diseases of the body controlling and influencing the affections of the mind. We attend “this quintessence of dust” to the awful approach of its worldly career; and we there witness a gradual extinction of being, not in body only, but also in mind; not of a part, but of the WHOLE MAN. We view him, who had by his works or his principles benefited mankind, or by his arms and his intellect governed nations, rapidly undergoing disorganization, and literally returning unto the dust from whence he came. We know that during his life the able exercise of his mental powers has been either encouraged or repressed, agreeably to his original organization, his education, his principles, and the degree of mental and of bodily activity which may have been promoted or neglected. We perceive that the possession of full vigour is of but comparatively short duration, either in mind, or in body; and that with the decay of the organization, the mental powers decline also; and, finally, we know that life—nay more, that mind—never has been known to exist, except in connection with organization.

* See *Lawrence*.

What do we infer, or rather what does our reason compel us to conclude, from all this succession of phenomena? The existence of an immaterial soul, having no quality in common with, while it acts upon, the body? Or, rather, that all these never-failing effects can best be explained by causes which are neither imaginary nor mysterious, and by rational and simple views of our organization.—This theory, supported as it is by the test of experience, has driven the defenders of an immortal soul upon the horns of a dilemma: either to admit that life and thought result from the modification and organization of matter,—or that matter can, by no possibility, be capable of such manifestations. And may we not inquire—what human being has ever existed, who could discover what Matter can, or what it can not, be rendered capable of, by the great Architect of the universe?—unless, indeed, an authority before quoted may be regarded as an exception; who boldly makes short work of the powers of Omnipotence, by maintaining the impossibility of thought being the result of any organization. Locke, however, does not thus lowly estimate the capabilities of matter. “Solidity constitutes the essence of matter: whatever modifies solidity is matter: if God cannot join (*organize*) portions of matter together by means inconceivable to us, we must deny the existence and being even of matter itself.” Views so opposite relative even to the *capacity* of matter may be safely left to its detractors to reconcile, with whom the ideas of a modern authority may not be without its influence. Barclay, an immaterialist, apports to matter these capabilities: “Could it have been thought that sulphur, which is an inflammable substance; and oxygen, so necessary to the maintenance of flame,—could have formed an acid which actually lowers the temperature of snow? or that particles

of heat could have been concealed in the coldest bodies? *Let us not, therefore, presume that the living qualities of animals are different from the qualities of matter*.*” Thus one authority denies the *possibility* of matter possessing life, even in its lowest manifestations; another intimates, that it is capable of a modification of existence; and a third admits precisely the point contended for by the materialist, by virtue of whose creed it is, in truth, presumption to assert “that the living qualities of animals are different from the qualities of matter.”

MacLeay’s definition of life is as follows:—“By the term *life*, we would express that faculty which certain combinations of material particles possess, of existing for a certain time under a determinate form, and of drawing while in this state into their composition, and assimilating to their own nature, a part of the substances which may surround them, and of restoring the same again under various forms.—Like gravity and electricity, we know life only by its effects.—And on the whole we conclude that it is not a being enjoying a distinct existence, but an adherent quality which must necessarily have a subject. It is a motive quality of matter like gravity, *and without matter for its subject we have no reason to suppose that it can exist.* It is to the organic body, what the expansion of steel is to a watch, or that of steam is to the engine:—but if we ask what is expansion? what is life? WE CAN GET NO ANSWER BUT A RECITAL OF THEIR EFFECTS†.”

* Inquiry into the Opinions concerning Life and Organization, p. 26.

† In justice to Mr. MacLeay, the two paragraphs of the *Horæ Entomologicæ*, from which the above extracts are taken, are here subjoined, entire:—“By the term *life* we would express that faculty which certain combinations of material particles possess, of existing for a certain time under a determinate form, and of drawing while in this state into their composition, and assimilating to their own nature, a part of the substances which may surround them, and of restoring the same

These views of matter, if admitted, and also of life, as dependent upon organization, must be destructive of the doctrine of an immortal soul; for the strongest argument in its support has been hitherto deemed to rest upon the total impossibility of matter manifesting the properties of life without the residence of an immaterial spirit. And so essential to the system has this *extreme* position been esteemed, that in a review of the works of Lawrence and Rennell, the following undisguised statement of that doctrine occurs: "Wherever we see life, we will at once admit the existence of an immaterial principle, whether in the European, the Negro, or the oyster."

again under various forms. This life must not be confounded, as it has too often been, with the life of an immaterial intelligent being, which is totally distinct, and seems to be nothing else than a name given to the duration of its existence or happiness. It is therefore only to the first-mentioned faculty that the observations immediately following ought to be supposed to relate.

"How this faculty is acquired, what is its immediate cause, or, in other words, whether there may not be several mediate causes between it and the Primary Cause, are questions to the solution of which we are totally incompetent. Like gravity and electricity, we know life only by its effects, or rather we are acquainted with the three only as so many names given to certain combinations of effects. The particular combination or series of effects which we call life, differs from gravity or electricity in the circumstance that these effects are totally different from each other. They however all concur to the same object; namely, the preservation of the individual and of the species. We observe, however, that during life, organic bodies can resist most of those chemical and more general laws which govern inorganic matter, and can modify the inert properties of this by an apparatus of organs specially constructed for the purpose. And on the whole we conclude, that it is not a being enjoying a distinct existence, but an adherent quality which must necessarily have a subject. It is a motive quality of matter like gravity, and without matter for its subject we have no reason to suppose that it can exist. It is to the organic body what the expansion of steel is to a watch, or that of steam is to the engine:—but if we ask what is expansion? what is life? we can get no answer but a recital of their effects."

May the immaterialist be asked, in the name of Revelation, Of what value, to moral and accountable agents, can such a principle of immortality be deemed, which thus presents the doctrine of future existence, not as "*peculiar*" to the Gospel, or even to human beings, but which is made to depend upon a principle common to the oyster and to man? The honesty of the avowal, however, is not without its value; and the more so, from its being one which many of the older immaterialists, whilst pressed with the contradictions inseparable from their system, were too wary thus nakedly to admit: for if their own definitions of matter be correct, then, as a consequence, a mouse or a mackerel must be composed of something more than matter; and if the mental powers of man can not, by possibility, be the result of organization,—then, by analogy, the mental powers of the dog, the camel, and the elephant, can only be accounted for, from their possessing, in common with man, immaterial souls.

And further, upon the supposition of their position being correct, immaterial souls must be conferred even upon a still lower scale of animal life than the selection above; and we may proceed, if not quite, yet almost, to the vegetable kingdom; admitting, with Lamareck, that the passage from the least perfect plant to the least perfect animal, is quite insensible; and that "where organization is the most simple, animals approach nearest to plants."

But little superiority to the vegetable can be discovered in those aquatic animals which are described as masses of homogeneous and sensible pulp, through which there is a sort of nervous system. There are atoms too whose nature is so ambiguous as to be difficult to account for on the principle of animal life. The animalcula which exist in myriads even in the vegetable part of creation; the intestinal worms which grow in the liver of

sheep ; the thousand species of lice, and each peculiar to some plant or animal ;—all have life, and the means of existence. Thus the consistent immaterialist is placed in one of two situations : either to renounce his doctrine ; or to submit unconditionally to the hypothesis—that life cannot, even in the instances above given, result simply from organization ; and that, consequently, the minutest atom of animal life is inhabited by an immaterial spirit. To have, in plain language, such a position, is important to the argument ; the more so, from the fact that some of the defenders of an immaterial soul confine its possession to man, *because* of his mental powers : but this modified doctrine being overthrown by a reference to the qualities of the brute tribes, the results of such investigations have not unfrequently been manifested in either an unqualified admission of the materiality and natural mortality of the whole man, or the immateriality of all the animal creation !

A “Medical Student of Oxford University,” and also other immaterialists, have lamented that the Cambridge Advocate and his supporters should have admitted, as well as contended for, too much ; and have allowed that mere “life” may be conceded to matter—that matter may be organized ; but that mental manifestations—that even any degree of the reasoning faculty—bespeak the want and necessity of spiritual agency ; that such agency is *confined* to human beings ; and that our faculties, in common with the tenure by which we hold an interest in futurity, are the result of Immaterialism. Still the criterion by which the existence of an immaterial spirit is to be attested, will, upon a reference to the brute creation, destroy this view of the subject : for it will be found that the exercise of mental powers, of memory, of deliberation,—of, in fact, *mind*, is not confined to the human species. In support

of this view may be instanced the oft-repeated cases of the elephant, the ourang-outang, the fox, the beaver, the bee, and the intelligence even of the ass, as especially manifested when travelling over the Alps, or of the mule in traversing the Andes.

Mental powers are alike manifested by the feathered tribe; for "in the breeding season numerous troops of puffins visit several places on our coasts, particularly the small island of Priestholm near Anglesey, which might well be called Puffin-land, as the whole surface appears literally covered with them. Soon after their arrival in May, they prepare for breeding; and it is said, the male, contrary to the usual œconomy of birds, undertakes the hardest part of the labour. He begins by scraping up a hole in the sand not far from the shore, and after having got to some depth, he throws himself on his back, and with his powerful bill as a digger, and his broad feet to remove the rubbish, he excavates a burrow with several windings and turnings from eight to ten feet deep. *He prefers, when he can find a stone, to dig under it, in order that his retreat may be more securely fortified*.*"

"Many other remarkable circumstances might be mentioned, that would fully demonstrate faculties of *mind*, not only innate, but acquired ideas, derived from necessity in a state of domestication, which we call understanding and knowledge;—this bird (the Ferruginous Thrush) could associate ideas, arrange and apply them in a rational manner according to circumstances: for instance, if he knew that it was the hard sharp corners of the crumbs of bread that hurt his gullet and prevented him from swallowing it, and that water would soften and render it easy to be swallowed, this knowledge must be acquired by observa-

* See Library of Entertaining Knowledge: *Architecture of Birds*.

tion and experience. Here he perceived by the effect, the cause; and then took the quickest method to remove that cause,—*What could the wisest man have done better*?*”

“It is related of M. Dupont de Nemours that he had a cow, which singly knew how to open the gates of an inclosure: the herd waited impatiently near the entrance for their leader.—I have the history of a pointer, which, when kept out of a place near the fire by the other dogs of the family, used to go into the yard and bark; all immediately came and did the same; *meanwhile he ran in, and secured the best place.* I also knew of a little dog, which, when eating with large ones, behaved in the same manner in order to secure his portion, or to catch some good bits. It is true that animals are not confined in their actions solely to such as are required for their preservation,—*they vary their manners according to the circumstances in which they live, and are susceptible of an education beyond their wants†.*”

“The modification produced in the different races of dogs, exhibits the influence of man in the most striking point of view. These animals have been transported into every climate, and placed in every variety of circumstances;—they have been made the servant, the companion, the guardian and the intimate friend of man: and the power of a superior genius has had a wonderful influence, not only on their forms, but on *their manners and intelligence.* Different races have undergone remarkable changes, in the quantity and colour of their clothing. There are differences also of another kind, no less remarkable; as in size—the length of their muzzles—the convexity of their foreheads ‡.”

* Wilson's *American Ornithology*, p. 119.

† See Spurzheim's *Origin of the Mental Faculties.*

‡ Lyell's *Geology*, vol. ii. p. 126.

Do not these facts demonstrate that memory, deliberation, judgement, mind, are not confined to the human animal? And hence the position which goes to confer spiritual agency on man, *because* of his mind,—must be deemed untenable: and, except by abandoning the whole immaterial system, its supporters cannot well avoid being driven to the same concessions which they have condemned in others;—namely, that if immaterialism be true, the ape, equally with the philosopher, is animated by an immaterial spirit. Amidst the contradictions common to immaterialism, one party, as a guide to our paths, tells us that although brutes have souls, yet that “an immaterial spirit is not, as such, *necessarily* immortal.” Thus the system, as the supposed ground or means of future existence, is by such an admission shaken to its base. Some of its lawgivers, indeed, were wont to contend that “immaterial spirits were *inherently* immortal; and that they were immortal *because* they were immaterial.” But if there is to be a classification of souls, some mortal and some immortal,—who can maintain that the soul of man, if he possess one, is not as mortal as his body? And how can the mind be extricated from the endless labyrinth of doubt and uncertainty into which, by such an hypothesis, it must be plunged? Another authority, as a lamp to our feet, states,—that while all living beings are inhabited by immaterial souls, yet that it is probable man alone has succeeded in gaining those which will not die. The means by which to apply the test of immortality to these spirits is not supplied—at least, not from the Scriptures: but the *Christian Advocate* has oddly enough taken us back—not to Jesus, but to Plato!!

“The very *desire* of immortality which distinguishes the human soul, is of itself a POWERFUL argument for the attainment of its object; for there is no desire of the hu-

man mind of which man has not some means of fulfilment! As, therefore, in man the existence of this rational desire is a strong presumption in favour of its gratification; so absence of the desire in the animal is ALMOST a *proof* that, from its very nature, it is incapable of immortality*."

This antiquated and somewhat dangerous argument in favour of a future state, hardly presents sufficient strength for undergoing dissection; as a very slight acquaintance with the human mind will show that the mere existence of a "desire" is not a "presumption" at all, much less a *strong* one, "in favour of its gratification." Instances present themselves in the "*desire*" for riches and for power,—desires which doubtless "distinguish" man from "the animal;" and which, "strongly" and "universally" as they unquestionably exist, are yet found to furnish, anything rather than a rational and confident assurance of their gratification. But passing from these, and a numerous catalogue of desires, which are but partially gratified, and which are deemed to belong "peculiarly" to the human race, for the purpose of instancing in illustration one desire which is cherished alike by the peasant and by the philosopher, by the king and by the beggar, and yet it never has been gratified—the desire for a longer continuance of life than that naturally allotted to man. Now as this desire is truly "universal," and does "distinguish man from the animal,"—what reason can be furnished not merely for its non-accomplishment, but that, deeply as it is rooted in the human heart, yet its existence does not add one moment to our present life? But if the position referred to were a just one,—then, by virtue of its possession of the requisite qualifications, man would not require futurity, for he would, by his "*desires*," insure to himself immortality in the present state of things.

* Rennell, p. 115.

We now view, in brief, the creeds of Immaterialism ; and they appear to be : First, That matter cannot possess life ; and that, consequently, in its very lowest possible state of animation, there must reside within it an immaterial spirit.

Secondly, That matter may be so organized as to have mere life, but not mental qualities.

Thirdly, That immaterial souls are not, as such, necessarily immortal.

It is imperative upon immaterialists to demonstrate—*Why*, and on what principle, matter divinely organized should be incapable of exercising the functions of animal life.—*Why*, if an immaterial principle be necessary to account for the manifestation of mind in the child or the idiot, it is not also necessary for the dog or the horse.—*Why*, if it be conceded to these animals, it should be denied to the mouse and to the maggot.

Still, as it is held that because of the *superior* intellect of man, an immaterial and immortal spirit is indispensable, a few instances connected with the life and mind of our species may be the easiest mode of attesting the bearing of this argument. And first let us view the phænomena of

The BRAIN : and, as connected therewith, the manifestations of our mental faculties ; which, without referring to the invaluable discoveries of Dr. Spurzheim, are deemed by a host of physiological authorities to depend upon its organization. In evidence of this may be instanced the fact, that the minds of the mass of Negroes and of Hottentots are found to be inferior to those of the mass of Europeans. And looking for causes adequate to the production of facts so well attested, something beyond the differences arising from education, climate, and civilization, would seem to be requisite : and such causes at once challenge our observation, not, as is asserted by Lawrence, because of the

organization of the brain of the Negro or the Hottentot being less perfect, but that their brain manifests a national and distinctive organization; and this peculiarity of structure is not less discoverable in the results of their mental powers, than in the outward and visible signs of their peculiar conformation. In like manner the mental character of the ourang-outang may be said, when compared with other species of the same tribe, to exhibit proofs of some degree of superiority; and this superiority which places him above other monkeys, can be best accounted for from his organization: but still, that organization, whilst it is perfect for the purposes for which the animal is destined, is not comparable to the lowest class of mankind.

The confined degree of intellect in the idiot has been often found to proceed from defective or from diseased organization of the brain. Among the brute tribes, too, the dog and the elephant are placed above some other animals; and they manifest a superior cerebral structure. Thus organization easily accounts for the varieties in man and in animals. But once withdraw this simple and comprehensive solution of our physiological inquiries, and substitute immaterial and self-existent agency, and we become involved in incomprehensible contradictions and absurdities.

The capability of thinking, that marvellous mental process, which the immaterialist deems to be too attenuated for organized matter, is found to depend upon the sound state of our bodily powers,—especially of the brain.

The importance of such facts as these to the settlement of this controversy having been foreseen by Mr. Rennell, he attempts to arrest their consequences, by intimating that the mind has attained to its full vigour, not at thirty, but at *seven* years of age.

“Cases” (see Rennell) “daily occur, where the strength

is gone, the vital principle rapidly retreating, and the patient is lying helpless, hopeless, waiting for the very moment of impending dissolution; yet his mind shall be as vigorous, his judgement as sound, his imagination as ardent, as in the days of his health and strength; and even in the very convulsions of bodily death, the life of his understanding and his affections shall be unimpaired."

Here, without concealment, Immaterialism is carried out to a large extent; and we may very contentedly go along with the author, assuming, that if man has an immaterial and immortal soul, then, indeed, the facts might be expected as above stated; but their *constant* and inevitable occurrence must be held to be inseparable from the conclusion which is attempted to be established; assuming, as it does, that death releases the soul from its "prison-house." Thus, if *death* be an advantage with regard to thinking, then *disease* should be a proportional advantage; so that the nearer the body approaches to a state of dissolution, the freer and stronger ought to be the faculties of the mind.

The argument in support of Materialism will not sustain any injury from an admission that such cases as the above may occur,—but not "daily;" they are very rare and extraordinary instances,—the *exceptions, not the rule*. And taking death as the touchstone of the immaterial hypothesis, the contemplation of, and preparation for, a season of perfect liberty to the soul, together with the weakened state of its "sluggish prison," ought to cause vigour and ardour not merely equal, but increased, as compared to that of any former period—at least during its connection with matter. Cases it may be noted also occur, in which great vigour of *body* is experienced even at "the very moment of impending dissolution." And if the case put can be deemed to support Immaterialism, why may not the latter fact as

successfully prove the *immortality* of the *body*, as the other instances do the immortality of the mind? But both are alike beside the question; the *rule* being one from which even the most gifted mortal cannot claim exception,—that the mind becomes weak as the body tends towards death; and that, as it regards any sudden increase of energy immediately preceding the termination of our mortal career, it will be found that occasionally a temporary stimulus has excited the feeble mind to a short-lived exertion, or that from a change in the circulation, or the remission of inflammatory action, it has in our declining moments resumed its wonted vigour.

From the organization of the brain, from the mental manifestations connected therewith, and from the influence which it communicates *to* and receives *from* all other parts of the body, we proceed to instance that dreadful affliction of the mind—INSANITY.

The insane mind, upon reference to our medical institutions, will not be found to be treated as the disease of an immaterial spirit*; and Lawrence states that he has examined, after death, the heads of many insane persons, and has hardly ever seen a single brain which did not exhibit obvious marks of disease. Insane symptoms, too, he acutely observes, have the same relation to the brain that vomiting has to the stomach, cough to the lungs, or any other deranged function to their corresponding organs. These views are fortified by the effects produced upon insane persons; in regard to whom vigorous medical treatment is found to be as efficacious as when applied to an arm, a leg, or any other member of the frame of man. And can it be maintained that the immortal mind changes with age, and is different in the same person, a child, adult, or decrepit? “insanity being generally

* See Haslam *on Madness*.

manifested at certain periods of life, and most frequent (idiotism excepted) between 30 and 40, less between 20 and 30, very young and very old people are hardly known to become insane. Thus the manifestations of the mind are the most liable to derangements when they are the most energetic, and this is the case when the cerebral organization is the most active*.”

What, it has been pertinently asked, should we think of persons who gravely told us that jaundice was a disease of an immaterial principle; that asthma was an affection of a spiritual being; and that insanity was the disorder of an immortal soul? A ready reply presents itself,—that such persons were not cautious and prudent; but that they were *consistent*, and perhaps the *only* class of consistent defenders of immaterialism,—the inconsistencies enumerated being less chargeable upon the advocates than the system.

From the Brain and its diseases, some phænomena connected with the BLOOD may also tend to show that life, as well as mind, can be best accounted for, from a view of our organization;—a view not unsupported in the earliest records of our species; the Divine Being having thus announced his will to the Patriarch: “But flesh with the *life thereof, which is the blood thereof*, shall ye not eat†.”

The circulation of the blood, and the interesting facts connected therewith, are generally known. Our physicians having succeeded, in an extraordinary manner, in what may be almost denominated a renewal of life, by means of the transfusion of blood,—a practice, as recorded in the Philosophical Transactions, which was successfully pursued in the 17th century. Dr. Lower states that he procured a dog of an ordinary size, and two mastiffs; he opened the jugular vein of the small dog, and permitted

* Spurzheim on *Insanity*, p. 106.

† Gen. ix. 4.

his blood to flow till he ceased to howl, became feeble, and fell into convulsions. The Doctor then transfused the blood of one of the mastiffs, till the vessels of the small dog were again filled;—and exhausted the blood of the mastiff, which consequently died. He then closed the incision in the jugular vein of the small dog, which, upon being untied, leaped from the table and fawned upon its master. The Doctor's experiment was carried further, by applying the principle to human beings, and with extraordinary success,—a success which, when applied to the “higher orders,” tended to expose the prejudices which existed as to noble and ignoble blood: for it was found that the blood even of a prince might be improved, or the immortal soul kept alive within a baron's body, by a few ounces of blood extracted even from the calf or the fox. But these experiments, however successful, were found to be too levelling, and were by those in authority, ultimately, and wisely in their generation, suppressed, lest the “order” should be contaminated.

Passing from particular details to the combined qualities of the frame of man, and taking the human offspring not merely at the period of its birth, but even prior to that event, it has with great propriety been asked,—Could the immaterial mind have been connected with it at this period? The believers in the separate existence of mind have left us quite in the dark as to the precise time when the soul enters into its prison-house and unites the earthly dust with the immaterial essence. But the Roman Catholics, who are not in this particular inconsistent in their immaterialism, solve all difficulties, by deciding that the embryo is inhabited by an immortal spirit, and therefore the Church appoints, in case of danger, such religious ceremonies as are deemed to be essential to the exigency.

In proceeding from minute details to a review of gene-

ral principles, it should seem that the doctrines of Immaterialism totally fail to supply either adequate, or even comprehensible, causes for the endless varieties which are presented by all created beings; and in looking from the insect up to man, an immaterial agency fails in accounting, even according to the doctrines of its supporters, for admitted facts and effects. Why therefore should the position be contested, that matter variously modified and organized offers an intelligible solution of, and an adequate cause for, all these effects? And should the difficulty be raised as to *how* matter can perceive, remember, judge, reason,—the oft-repeated reply at once presents itself by shaping a similar inquiry for the immaterialist, as to *how* spirit can perform these operations, and what evidence can be given of even the existence of spirit, with the qualities ascribed. But are we, because we cannot tell *how* these various phænomena are accomplished, therefore to acquiesce in the gravest absurdities, and the most monstrous contradictions? It certainly is not known *how* the brain accomplishes its purposes; but, as has been well stated, all are equally ignorant as to *how* the liver secretes bile, *how* the muscles contract, *how* any living purpose is effected, *how* bodies are attracted to the earth, *how* iron is drawn to the magnet, or *how* God exists;—and, with Elihu in Job, we may ask, “Dost *thou* know the balancing of the clouds, the wondrous works of Him who is perfect in knowledge*?”

A careful observance of nature and of experience, connected with and based upon rational views of the Scriptures, are our only guides, in relation to ourselves and our destiny: if we travel beyond their teaching, we become involved in a labyrinth from which there is no deliverance. And touching inquiries as to *how* the mechanism

* Job xxxvii. 16.

of nature is carried on, we shall find every thing around us beyond the reach of our intellects,—from the stone which falls to the earth, to the comet which traverses the heavens ; from the most minute manifestation of animal life, to the production of an Abraham and a Moses, a Paul and a Jesus. We do not know *how* we shall exist in a future life: but we have the assurance of the appointed messengers of God, that we shall do so ; and we are not left to mere speculation, as to the means of our re-existence,—the Resurrection from the Dead, not an inherent immortality, being proclaimed by competent authority to be such ; and when satisfied with the evidence upon which that authority rests, we are enabled to compare it with the doctrine of the natural immortality of the living and thinking powers of man. Immaterialism we find to be irreconcilable with the known facts and effects which are characteristic of living and thinking beings ; besides which it is involved in inexplicable and endless absurdities and contradictions ; we therefore turn with satisfaction to the opposite hypothesis, and persuade ourselves that it sufficiently solves all our difficulties, by admitting evidence so tangible that we may be justified in concluding that every manifestation of life, or of mind, which we see in creation, may result from one principle, simple in itself, but variously modified and organized, suitable to, and explanatory of, the circumstances, conditions, and nature of every living being ; and we feel justified in concluding, in relation to the whole of animal life, that which Napoleon did of man only, that they are “ machines for the purpose of life, organized to that end ; like a well-made watch, destined to go for a certain time*.”

Such being the conviction, and such the feelings, in-

* See Las Casas.

duced by these views, may we not turn with high satisfaction to the Psalmist, and say with him, of the Supreme Being,—“I will praise thee, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made. Marvellous are thy works, and that my soul knoweth right well. If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there. If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea, even there shall thy right hand lead me. O Lord! thou hast searched me and known me; thou knowest my down-sitting and mine uprising.—O Lord! how manifold are thy works! in wisdom hast thou made them all. The earth is full of thy riches.”

Organization is essential to life - but this is no proof either one way
 or the other that man ^{or brute} ~~life~~ may not enter into another state of
 existence - after death & that he has or has not a spiritual essence
 - at most it only proves that life depends on organization & as far
 as we know the immortal part if it exists is not requisite
 to the functions of life. The doctrine of the immortality of the
 soul is entirely impertinent if we exclude Revelation.)
 J. D. M.

CHAPTER III.

THE SCRIPTURAL EVIDENCE.

“The more any man is convinced of the immortality of the soul from the principles of Aristotle or Des Cartes, the less will he concern himself about the Gospel account of futurity.”—*Archdeacon Blackburne*.

As introductory to the Scriptural portion of this argument, it may be well to refer to one or two documents, characteristic of the age in which they appeared, and which were deemed to possess no ordinary degree of authority.

The canon of Leo X. will not be found deficient in the qualities which similar statements generally possess, whether of Catholic or of Protestant origin. “Some have *dared* to assert concerning the nature of the reasonable soul, that it is mortal; *we*, with the approbation of the *sacred Council*, do condemn and reprobate all such,—seeing, *according to the canon of Pope Clement the Fifth*, that the soul is immortal; and we strictly inhibit all from dogmatizing otherwise: and we decree, that all who adhere to the like erroneous assertions, shall be shunned and punished as heretics.”—In passing from Catholic to Protestant authority, the honour of condemning such as dissented from the doctrines of Plato and Socrates was participated in by our English Reformers: and on the Continent, after the second Helvetic Confession was published, in an article supposed to have been drawn up by Beza, under the title “*The Creation of all things, of Angels, the Devil, and Man*,” it is solemnly announced, after a description of the qualities of the soul, as well as those of the body—that “We condemn all who scoff at the im-

mortality of the soul, or bring it into doubt by subtle disputations.’’

Unconvinced by these and other announcements of an equally formidable description, may we not be content to rest our faith upon Scriptural evidence, rather than upon the “Canon of Pope Clement the Fifth,” although His Holiness, armed with infallibility, proclaims that the soul *is* immortal? But still, despite of this declaration, there is some satisfaction in turning to the authorities on the adverse side of this controversy; and amongst such, few have in an equal degree distinguished themselves with the English ecclesiastic before quoted, who candidly admits of his Protestant brethren, that, “either unable or unwilling to investigate the meaning of certain terms used in the Scriptures,” they “weakly concluded, from the mere *sound* of them, that the doctrines of the Scriptures and the reigning philosophy” (concerning a future state) “were one and the same thing.” What that “*reigning philosophy*,” was, and, to a great extent, still remains, has been stated in the previous pages; and what those “*certain terms*” are, which, from their “*mere sound*,” have been pressed into the service of this philosophy, it is of first importance in this investigation to ascertain with accuracy. But in consequence of the obscurity which those who attempt to fasten Immaterialism upon the Scriptures have cast upon this subject, I deem to be desirable the recognition of these several positions:—

First—That as, from an investigation of nature, a distinct spiritual and immortal principle in man is admitted *not* to be discoverable, we can believe in such from Revelation only; and that, too, explicitly and distinctly communicated; and which being therefore free from ambiguity, would not be capable of being misunderstood.

Secondly—That the fact of a merely *popular* belief

by the Jews, of doctrines not *expressly* revealed by God, cannot be received as evidence of the truth of such doctrines. And,

Thirdly—That the language of the Scriptures should be taken agreeably to the sense in which it was generally understood when they were written; and in connexion with the context; and also in consistency with the general scheme of Divine Revelation.

With these positions distinctly recognized, we proceed to an examination of the Old and New Testaments, bearing in mind the case put by the supporters of immaterialism—that upon the truth of that doctrine depends *our only hope of future existence*. And in so vital a feature of our faith, is it contending for too much, that the Scriptural evidence in its support should be clear, distinct and intelligible,—and not, as is singularly and reluctantly, though certainly with much honesty, admitted by its advocate, Tillotson, “that the immortality of the soul is rather supposed, or taken for granted, than expressly revealed in the Bible?”*—It may, however, be shown that the bishop is in error, even as regards what he asserts to be thus “taken for granted” in the Bible.

It will avail little to the argument that the mere word “SOUL” is to be found in our Bibles; for words, taken alone and independent of their connexion, are not usually held to establish doctrines; and in illustration of this view we might instance that all-important tenet in the faith of believers—the existence and attributes of the Divine Being: for upon reference to the Scriptures, it will be found that the word “GOD,” (were there nothing but the term itself,) would fail in conveying to us either that there was *one only* God, or that he was a self-existent being; for even this term is applied in the Scriptures to princes and magis-

* *Sermons*, vol. ii.

trates. The recurrence, likewise, however frequent, of "SPIRIT," or "SOUL," any more than that of "GOD," must fail, if adduced, to establish any, much less leading and important doctrines. Nor, looking at the language of the Scriptures, will the argument be aided, should it be conceded that the Jews believed in the existence of Spirits, and the interference of such, in bodily shapes, with human affairs: not to note that the defenders of immaterialism might be called upon to prove the consistency of such alleged appearances with their own views—namely, that the soul is immaterial—ærial—not sensible to the sight or to the touch? Besides, without taking into the account the superstitious tendency of the human mind, and its proneness to speculate upon, and its ignorance of, futurity, it should be remembered that the Israelitish people having emerged from an heathen nation, and having frequently been captive among others, they must necessarily have imbibed much of the false philosophy, and many of the absurd notions and speculations of such nations; and the Jewish history shows the almost herculean labour which Moses and the Prophets had to sustain, in order to purge them from their old impurities. They also evinced, in the early part of their history, a strong attachment towards idolatrous worship, and, as connected therewith, a predisposition to believe in the existence and power of innumerable gods; so that any opinions held by this people, which were not derived from their divinely appointed teachers, cannot be entitled to the slightest weight in this argument. The discussion, therefore, cannot be aided by a reference to the *unauthorized* opinions of the Jewish people. Should it even appear that the first followers of Jesus held views not unfavourable to immaterialism,—that some of his immediate disciples (being Jews) should have shared in the popular faith,—or that

even Jesus himself, when addressing the multitude, made use of the popular language of his country,—even these combined facts would neither teach the truth of the doctrine, nor prove that its belief was inculcated by revealed religion. And in illustration, the case of dæmoniacal possessions might be adduced; for this doctrine has for its support *all* the points of authority above referred to; namely, the popular belief of the Jews, the occasional references to it in the Scriptures, and the language of Jesus and his Apostles: yet dæmons were not expelled from within the sufferers, but certain diseases were cured. But if the superstitions of the Jewish nation, and the use, by Jesus or the Apostles, of the ordinary language of the times, be held to establish leading doctrines of Revelation, then the immaterialist must take the consequences of his own argument, and be compelled to admit that Mary Magdalene was not cured of an excruciating disease, but had actually expelled from within her seven devils! But it is not thus that the Scriptures announce valuable truths and essential doctrines; for when such are communicated, they are not left for inferential discovery, neither are they to be collected from precarious and doubtful sources of authority: and had the doctrine of the immortality of the soul been true, it must have been communicated in a manner equally distinct, because equally required to be so, as that even of the existence of but one God—of pardon upon repentance—and of the resurrection from the dead. Thus, in relation to God and to his providence, the following are the clear and distinct announcements: “I the Lord speak righteousness, I declare things that are right. Who hath declared this from ancient time? have not I the Lord? and there is no God else beside me; a just God and a Saviour; *there is none beside me.* Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth; for I am God,

and there is none else*.” And whenever the Prophets or Apostles reason upon the being and attributes of the Deity, they are, as the above is, clear, distinct, and intelligible. Thus, in the instance of Paul, when addressing the Athenian philosophers—“God that made the world and all things therein, seeing that he is Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands; neither is worshiped with men’s hands, as though he needed anything; seeing he giveth to all life, and breath, and all things†.” In what is designed here to be conveyed, can there be a rational doubt that it is the oneness, the power and attributes of the Supreme Being?—The doctrine also of the forgiveness of sins upon repentance, and that of a future state of existence by means of a resurrection from the dead, are equally clear and intelligible‡. And can it be believed that had the immateriality and immortality of the soul been a Bible doctrine, it would not have been taught with equal plainness and distinctness? And if so, then would it have derived its chief support from popular ignorance—have called for aid from Socrates or Plato? would its elucidation have depended upon Catholic Councils or Protestant Confessions of faith; or, like the system which Tillotson advocates, be required “to be *rather supposed* or taken for granted.” The archbishop’s admission, indeed, upon this point, may be regarded as of important service in the present controversy, seeing that it puts into the hands of his opponents a triumphant weapon against his own doctrine; for neither Jesus nor the Apostles required *their* adherents to take their principles “*for granted*;” and it is difficult, if not

* Isa. xlv. 19—23.

† Acts xvii. 24, 25.

‡ In relation to the first of these doctrines consult the following passages: Matth. iii. 2. iv. 17; Luke xxiv. 47; Acts v. 31. xi. 18. xxvi. 20. And upon the latter, see Acts iv. 22; 1 Cor. xv.

absurd, to conceive that the sole foundation of the future hopes of the Believer should rest upon a doctrine “NOT EXPRESSLY TAUGHT IN THE BIBLE.”

Without further pressing these important concessions of our most gifted adversaries, and without more minutely dwelling upon the entire absence of that clear and distinct evidence which must characterize a doctrine thus pre-eminently important,—we proceed in the inquiry with an examination of the terms SOUL and SPIRIT, and the uses to which they have severally been applied by the authorized translators of the Scriptures. The Hebrew NEPHESH * admits of the following renderings: *mind; soul; breath; life; body; person; will*. The Greek PSUCHE † may be translated, *breath; life; soul; spirit; mind; or person*. The Latin ANIMA ‡, *life; soul; breath; wind*. In our own language also, the word *soul*, from the Saxon SAWEL §, is used variously, and our authorities give it the following renderings: *soul; spirit; life; mind*. The word SPIRIT has a different derivation, although it is fre-

* “נֶפֶשׁ *anima, spiritus*. The animal life, or that principle by which every animal, according to its kind, lives; Gen. i. 30. [*every beast,—fowl, &c. wherein there is life, † the soul of life.*] Which animal life, so far as we know any thing of the manner of its existence, or so far as the Scripture leads our thoughts, consists in the *breath*, (Job xli. 21.—xxx. 39. *to lose—life, † to breathe out the soul,*) and in the *blood*; (Lev. xvii. 11. 14. [*the life, † the soul, of the flesh is in the blood.*] Jer. ii. 34. [*the blood of the souls of poor innocents.*]) is supported and refreshed by meat and drink, (Numb. xi. 6. Psal. cvii. 5. Isai. xxix. 8. Lam. i. 11. 19.), and is taken away when the animal dieth or is slain, Gen. xxxvii. 21. [*Let us not kill him, † smite him in the soul.*] Deut. xix. 6. 11. Psal. lvi. 13.—cxvi. 8. Prov. i. 19. Jer. xv. 9. Isai. xxxviii. 17. Psal. xlix. 15.—xciv. 17. Job xxxiii. 30.”—See *Taylor’s Hebrew Concordance*.

The primary meaning of נֶפֶשׁ, rendered *soul* in Isaiah lvii. 16, is also *air, wind, breath*.

† PSUCHE, from PSUCHO, *to blow*.

‡ From the Greek word ANEMOS, *wind*.

§ Written also SAWUL, SAUL, and SAWL: Danish SIEL; Belgic SIELE: Mæso-Gothic SAIWALA.

quently used as a convertible term with that of *soul*. The Hebrew RUACH denotes *wind; spirit; the power of the Deity; mind; vigour; life; breath; person**. The Greek PNEUMA (hence Pneumatics,) is rendered, *breath; spirit; wind; the air*. The Latin SPIRITUS, *breath; wind; spirit; mind; soul*.

It will thus be apparent that our translators were not hampered as to the adoption of appropriate terms, in rendering the original into the English language: and it might be shown, that in relation to Immaterialism, in common with other popular doctrines, the authorized version has been deeply tinged with the corrupt theology of the State; the translators having been but too apt to depart from the invaluable rule, that “a translation of the Bible should express every word in the original by a literal, verbal, or close rendering, where the English idiom admits of it,” a rule of translation which has since been ably exemplified by Archbishop Newcomb, whereas they ought to have either selected such terms as could not fairly have led to misconception, and to have rejected all which were of a doubtful or equivocal meaning; or, if they were determined to retain the latter, they should have used them without favour or affection, equally and in *all* cases; so that the very connexion in which they would have been found constantly to occur, must have enabled the ordinary reader to understand their general import: thus, by their occurring in passages which were plain and definite, such uses of the words would naturally be employed for the purpose of explaining those which were less so. But, in truth, neither of these rules has been systematically followed, arising, amongst other circumstances possibly,

* Lardner gives these as the senses in which RUACH is used: the *air, wind, breath, life, spirit, divine influence or will*: see his *Letter on the Logos*.

from the fact that the Scriptures were parcelled out to a number of persons for translation: these parties were also professors of orthodox and mystical doctrines, and they might, without an evidently corrupt design, naturally feel inclined to bend the text to the reigning orthodoxy of the times.

In the case of the address of the King of Sodom to Abraham, the discretion of the translators would seem to have been correctly exercised:—"Give me the *persons*, and take the goods to thyself*." But in the Jewish law, the same term is there rendered *soul*; and that, too, in a case where, from the connexion, it is self-evident that it should have been *person*: "And whatsoever man there be that eateth any manner of blood, I will even set my face against that *soul* that eateth blood; for the *life* of the flesh is in the blood †." In the Book of Lamentations,—where the case is equally plain, though, from the difference of the subject treated upon, capable of possible misconception,—the translator presents us with the term *soul*. "The Lord is my portion, saith my *soul* (mind). The Lord is good unto the *soul* that seeketh him ‡."

Of the Greek *pneuma*, we may look at the instance of Paul, when showing the Corinthians that it is the mind of God which knoweth the things of God, and the mind of man which knoweth the things of man. "For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the *spirit* (mind) of man, which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the *spirit* of God §." Here the translators have chosen the term "*spirit*," when another, that of *mind*, which could not by possibility have been misconceived, was equally at their service. In other cases, how-

* Gen. xiv. 21.

† Levit. xvii. 10, 11.

‡ Lam. iii. 24, 25.

§ 1 Cor. ii. 11.

ever, they have pursued the opposite course; as where they have fairly rendered the term *wind*, in the address of Jesus to Nicodemus: “The *wind* bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof; but canst not tell whence it cometh, or whither it goeth*.” But clearly the translators should, in the one case as in the other, have exercised a sound discretion in the choice of such English phrases as would have given the sense which corresponded with the context; or they should, in *every* available case, have made use of the terms *soul* or *spirit*: and thus the very facts of the preservation of uniformity must have operated as a valuable preventive of misconception, or of a tendency towards the belief of false doctrines.

Having thus barely glanced at the translation of some of the passages which bear upon the present doctrine, it may be well to refer to such portions of the Scriptures as have been held to teach, or in any way support, Immaterialism. And as in this, more perhaps than in most controversies, it is desirable to have definite positions for examination; and in the absence of such on the side of the defenders of immaterialism, may we aim at supplying their deficiency, by classifying such points as may faithfully represent their system?

First, it is contended on Scriptural grounds, that God imparts to, and also withdraws from, the body of man, an immaterial, immortal soul or spirit: and *Secondly*, that the Apostles and Prophets, on various occasions, sanction, by their language, a belief in the doctrine of the immortality of the soul. It is also held by some of the sects of immaterialists, that the Scriptures indirectly support their doctrine, by teaching that there is an intermediate state of life after the death of the body, until the general resurrec-

* John iii. 8.

tion ;—the inference being, that there must therefore be a soul, because in the grave the body is entirely decomposed. As these positions, particularly the two first, are mainly supported by a reference to passages of the Scriptures in which the Hebrew and Greek terms occur to which we have already referred,—previously to an examination of particular passages, a brief classification of the various senses in which these words have been, or should be taken, may be useful : and for ease of reference, the following is submitted—Breath; Life; Person; Body; Wind, or Air; Mind, and the Affections. And from the passages which will be offered, it may further incidentally occur, that, whilst in many cases our translators have correctly chosen that term which best accorded with the sense of the original,—yet that in numerous instances in the common version, where the word *soul* or *spirit* occurs, one or other of the above terms might have been selected, as being freer from any tinge of popular error or probable misconception.

BREATH.—In Genesis, vii. 21—22. where the relation is given of the destruction caused by the Flood, it is said, “*All flesh* died that moved upon the earth; both of fowl, of cattle, and of beast,—and ALL in whose nostrils was the *breath* of life, that was in the dry land, died.” The *breath*, (or soul,) here clearly belongs alike to the beast and to man. In the Book of Ecclesiastes, the translators use in the same connexion and in the same sense “*spirit*,” and “*breath*.” From the verse which contains the former term, a most absurd conclusion has been drawn: the plain and forcible reflections of Solomon, upon the brevity of human life, being construed, or rather tortured, into a defence of the doctrine of an immortal soul! “For that which befalleth the sons of men befalleth beasts; even one thing

befalleth them: as the one dieth, so dieth the other; *yea, they have all one breath*:—ALL go unto one place; ALL are of the dust, and ALL turn to dust again*.” Thus far all is simple and incapable of misconception: but, lest materialism should be taught, and that too from the mouth of Solomon, confusion and mystification is incorporated with his sentiments, by the abandonment of the word “*breath*” and the substitution of “*spirit*,” and that, too, in the verse immediately following the above, and in the same connexion: “Who knoweth (distinguisheth) the SPIRIT of man that goeth upward, and the SPIRIT of the beast that goeth downward to the earth†?” Here substitute the word—used by the translators themselves in the preceding verses—*breath*, and no difficulty occurs: Man’s figure being erect, his *spirit*, or *breath*, goeth upwards; and that of beasts being the contrary ‡, their *spirit*, or *breath*, descendeth:—the argument and conclusion of the writer being, that when they cease to breathe, then their existence is ended; man, equally with the beast, returning to the dust from whence they came.

The term “*breath*” is used as the means, or rather the evidence, of the possession of life, by various authorities; in our language;—

“She shows a body, rather than a life—

A statue, than a *breather*.”—*Anthony and Cleop.* Act iii. Sc. 3.

Plutarch, too, represents the infant in the womb as nourished by nature like a plant; and when it is brought forth, as being “refreshed and hardened by the air, it being a

* Eccles. iii. 19, &c.

† Eccles. iii. 21.

‡ Quæ variis videas licet omnia discrepare formis,

Prona tamen facies hebetes valet ingravare sensus.

Unica gens hominum celsum levat altius cacumen.

Boethius, lib. v. met. 5.

breathing living animal.” And Plautus uses the word *soul* as convertible with that of *breath**—

“Thy wives’ *souls* stink.”

Thus also in the early part of Genesis, in the relation of the covenant with Noah, “Behold I, even I, do bring a flood of waters upon the earth, to destroy *all flesh*, wherein is the *breath* of life, from under heaven; and *every thing* that is in the earth shall die†.” So, in perfect accordance with this application of the term, Paul describes the Deity to the heathen philosophers as a “God that made the world, and all things therein; and giveth to ALL *life*, and *breath*, and all things‡.”

LIFE.—Amongst other instances which occur throughout the Scriptures, the following is offered from the Book of Job, in the reply to Zophar: “I am as one mocked of his neighbour;—the just and upright man is laughed to scorn. But ask now the beasts, and they shall teach thee; and the fowls of the air, and they shall tell thee; and the fishes of the sea shall declare unto thee;—the hand of the Lord hath wrought this, in whose hand is the *soul* (life) of *every* living thing, (i. e. the beasts, the fowls, the fishes,) and the *breath* of all mankind§” And such life, or soul, or spirit, is in the Scriptures represented as existing in the blood. Hence Noah and his sons are commanded not to eat flesh which contained blood: “Flesh with the *life* thereof, *which is the blood thereof*, ye shall not eat ||.” And in the levitical service, the blood, which was commanded to be poured out on the altar of burnt-offerings, and some of which would unavoidably run under the altar,

* An fœtet *anima* uxori tuæ?

Impellunt *animæ* lintea Thraciæ.—*Hor.*

‡ Aqua, terra, *anima*, et sol.—*Var. ex Enn.*

† Gen. vi. 17.

§ See Job xii. &c.

‡ Acts xvii. 25.

|| Gen. ix. 4.

is described as being the *life* (soul or spirit) of the animal which had been offered in sacrifice. Xenophon likewise uses the Greek term, rendered *soul*, in a corresponding meaning:—"Ye have preserved your *souls*" (lives). "He hath deprived my dear and only son of *soul*." And in a corresponding sense the Latin *anima* is used by Virgil:—

"He vomits forth his purple *soul*."

PERSON.—In the triumph of the Israelites over the five kings, Joshua relates, that "the Lord delivered them into the hands of Israel, who smote them, and left none remaining: and he *smote* all the *souls*, utterly destroying them, and there was not any left to *breathe**." See also in the Book of Numbers, where Eleazar the priest commands the Jews in what manner they should divide their spoil, in which place the word *soul* is used as applicable equally to beasts and to men: "Divide the prey into two parts; between those that went out to battle, and between all the congregation: and levy a tribute unto the Lord; one *soul* out of five hundred both of the persons, of the *beeves*, of the *asses*, and of the *sheep*†."

So also in the New Testament: When Peter addressed the Jews in the temple, he warned them that, as Moses had taught, "The Lord your God will raise up unto you a prophet; him shall ye hear in all things whatsoever he shall say unto you. And it shall come to pass, that *every soul* that will not hear that prophet, *shall be destroyed*‡."

BODY.—In the Mosaic law, relative to the vow of the Nazarites, the Jews are commanded—"All the days that they separate themselves, they shall come at no dead *body*" (dead *soul*). In the Book of Numbers, commands are given at greater length not to touch any dead person:

* Josh. xi. 11, &c.

† Numb. xxxi. 27, 28.

‡ Acts iii. 23.

“He that toucheth the dead body of any man, shall be unclean seven days;” (marginal readings, “the *dead soul* of any man.”) “Whosoever toucheth the dead body of any man that is dead,” (dead soul that is dead,) “and purifieth not himself, defileth the tabernacle of the Lord; and that *soul* shall be cut off from Israel. And whosoever toucheth one that is slain, or a *dead body*,” (dead soul,) “or a bone of him, shall be unclean seven days. For an *unclean person*” (unclean soul) “they shall take of the ashes of the burnt heifer of the purification for sin. But the man that shall not purify himself, *that soul* shall be cut off from among the congregation. And whatsoever the unclean person toucheth shall be unclean; and that *soul* that toucheth it shall be unclean until even*.”

WIND, OR AIR.—The powers of the Deity are thus described by Amos:—“Prepare to meet thy God, O Israel! for lo, he that formeth the mountains, and createth the *wind*, the Lord, the God of hosts, is his name†.” So in Zechariah’s vision, the four spirits there described are the four winds: “Then I answered, and said unto the angel (messenger) that talked with me, What are these? and the angel (messenger) answered, These are the four spirits (winds) of the heavens‡.”

In a similar sense the Latin phrase *spiritus*, is used by Virgil:—

“When the northern *blast*
Roars in the *Ægean*.”

And the English word *ghost*, being of the same root with *gust* (of wind§), is often used in a similar sense by our old writers. Thus Sydney represents Lucretia as having been precipitated into such a love-fit, that in a few hours “*she*

* See Numb. xix. 11. to end. † Amos iv. 13. ‡ Zechariah vi. 5.

§ German, GEIST. *Wind, breath, spirit, fancy, a ghost.*

ghosted;" and in the same sense, in the received version of the Scriptures and elsewhere, to "*give up the ghost*," is used for the giving up of life, the ceasing to *breathe*, as the ceasing to possess the means of life.

MIND, AND THE AFFECTIONS.—Thus Jesus, when quoting the prophecy of Isaiah concerning himself:—"Behold my servant, whom I have chosen; my beloved, in whom my *soul* (mind) is well pleased*." So in the Acts:—"The multitude of them that believed were of one heart and of one *soul* (mind)†." Also, as descriptive of the affections of the mind:—"Shechem's *soul* clave unto Dinah, and he loved the damsel‡." "The *soul* of Jonathan was knit with the *soul* of David, and Jonathan loved him as his own *soul*§." "Hearken diligently unto me, and eat ye that which is good, and let your *soul* delight itself in fatness||."

From these several cases, it will appear that the phrases rendered *soul* and *spirit*, are all of them capable of a rendering which does not imply or give the least support to the doctrine of an immortal, immaterial principle in man, distinct from his body, and from what may be called his animal life. It has, indeed, been well said, on what is considered *orthodox* authority, "*that this word in Scripture, especially in the style of the Hebrews, is very equivocal¶.*" If such then be the fact, why have not our translators selected terms which are *not* "very equivocal," such clearly being at their disposal? Or why have they sometimes retained the words *soul* and *spirit*, and at others, the sense and context being precisely similar, rendered them by intelligible phrases, as *life*, *breath*, &c.? To have been consistent, they should either have *always* avoided

* Matth. xii. 18.

† Acts iv. 32.

‡ Gen. xxxiv. 3.

§ 1 Sam. xviii. 1.

|| Isaiah lv. 2.

¶ Cruden's Concordance, Article "Soul."

the use of these phrases, or have *always* employed them. A valuable inference, however, flows directly from this classification; as it shows that the mere terms soul or spirit, thus arbitrarily adopted by our translators, ought not, and cannot be esteemed to teach the *doctrine* of immaterialism.

Having thus referred to the meaning of the terms employed in this controversy, I proceed to the investigation of that class of passages which comes under the first position—That God, at the formation of man, imparts to, and, at his death, withdraws from the body, an immaterial and immortal soul. Taking first the history of the creation, as recorded in the Book of Genesis, it is there stated, that after the heavens and the earth were formed, God having made every living thing after its kind, then man was called into being, and allowed to have dominion over all other animals; and it is affirmed that “the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living *soul**:” that is, a living person—a living body—a breathing, living man; any of these forms of expression being, not allowable merely, but actually essential to the sense of the original. But had our translators, in their use of this term, only been consistent even throughout these two first chapters of the Book of Genesis, we should not anticipate that a defender of immaterialism would resort for argument to the Mosaic account of creation: for only eighteen verses previous to the one just quoted, it is stated that God said, “Let the waters bring forth abundantly the moving creature that hath *life*;”—the same term afterwards rendered *soul*—and the margin of the old translations reads—“that hath *soul*.” And in the 30th verse of the 1st chapter, every green herb is offered for meat “to every *beast* of the

* Gen. ii. 7.

earth, and to every *fowl* of the air, and to every thing that creepeth upon the earth wherein there is *life*;"—in the Hebrew the same word as that rendered *soul*, and in the margin of our old Bibles—"To every thing that creepeth upon the earth which hath a *living soul*." But, without placing an exclusive reliance, which well might be done, upon, first, the acknowledged variety of terms in the translation; and, secondly, the application of the words "a living soul," equally with man, to *every* thing which "creepeth upon the earth," I look at that which is supposed to be the most difficult passage, the 7th verse of the 2nd chapter: God, we are told, out of the dust of the earth, "formed man;" that is, the *whole* man; not a part of him, not a mere shell, but the entire and complete machine: the materials with which this machine was formed are described as being, not in part, but solely "the dust of the ground:" they were material therefore, and perishable—not immaterial and immortal. "And he breathed into his nostrils the breath of life:" the formation of the machine proceeding (for the relation, in accordance with human language, is given as though there had been three stages in man's becoming a living person or soul); the air entering the nostrils—the lungs becoming inflated,—the heart beats—the blood circulates,—and *then* this organized machine becomes a living person, or soul. The general process of creation is described in a similar manner:—"These are the generations of the heavens and of the earth when they were created, in the day that the Lord God made the earth and the heavens; and every plant of the field *before* it was in the earth, and every herb of the field *before* it grew." Thus far the earth, the heavens, the herbs, and the plants, are described as having, like man, been "formed:" but a something *additional* is still, in *both* cases, required for perfecting the thing so made. In regard to

the former, "the Lord God had *not* caused it to rain upon the earth;" consequently, though made, it was not fertile; and the "plant of the field," and "the herb of the field," could not vegetate or grow; but "there went up a *mist* from the earth, and watered the face of the earth:" then, but not till then, the earth brought forth plenteously, and the plant and the herb "grew;"—consequently, this "mist" and its results were to vegetables the cause, or principle, of life, in the same way that the breath, which passed through man, was so to him: for as it was the rain which caused the plants and the herbs already formed, *to grow*,—so it was likewise the breath, or vital air, and not any immaterial principle, which, passing through the lungs of man, already created, caused him *to breathe*, and *move*, and *live*, and he forthwith *became a living being*. The process of vegetable life began in the one case—the process of animal life in the other. Let it be observed that the phraseology is, not that God made the *body* of man, and then infused therein a soul,—but that "man *became a living soul*:" not that he *received* a soul; he—himself—the *whole* man, thus formed from the dust of the earth, *was* the soul—the person—perfect and complete, but not set in motion; and when the air or breath of life had passed through the tubes and the valves of this complicated, this beautiful, this wonderful machine! then it was that man "became" a *living* soul or person.

As already observed, it is not to man alone that the expression *soul* is applied. The previous explanation of the word renders this intelligible. But how can those who associate with the term ideas of immortality,—how can *they* explain this? In the preceding chapter, *every* "beast of the earth," and every "fowl of the air," are described as becoming "*living souls*" upon precisely the same principle as man; and this sense of the word will be seen to

run through Milton's almost literal adaptation of the 1st chapter of Genesis:—

“And God said, ‘Let the waters generate,
 Reptile with spawn abundant, *living soul* :’
 And God created the great whales, and each
Soul living—each that crept—which plenteously
 The waters generated by their kinds.
 — He formed thee, Adam—thee, Oh man,
 Dust of the ground, and in thy nostrils breathed
 The breath of life—
 And thou becam’st a *living soul*.”—*Paradise Lost*, Book 7.

Returning to the Book of Genesis;—In the relation of the destruction occasioned by the flood, a similar mode of description is applied not to man only, but to “fowls,” to “cattle,” to “beasts,” and to “creeping things;” for “*all* in whose nostrils was the *breath* of life, of all that was in the dry land, died*.” Thus also, when the prophet Isaiah would represent the total insignificance of man, he exclaims, “Cease ye from man, whose *breath* (life) is in his nostrils : for wherein is he to be accounted of †?” So in Job also, where Elihu is addressing the Deity, “The spirit of God hath made me ; and the *breath* of the Almighty hath given me life ‡.” I am therefore perfectly willing to take the often-quoted verse from the 2nd of Genesis with the fullest latitude that can be given to the words as they stand ; and the passage then conveys this distinct information,—that God created man from the dust of the ground ; that he breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man *became* a *living soul* :—the whole, and not a part of him, being such. The interpreter therefore of this passage, who should attempt to deduce from it the doctrine of the soul’s separate existence, its immaterial and inherent immortality, is placed in the situation of admitting, first, that the word soul in this

* Gen. vii. 22.

† Isaiah ii. 22.

‡ Job xxxiii. 4.

passage should have been rendered person; and consequently, man's becoming a living soul, in that sense, is altogether foreign to the subject of an immortal soul: and, secondly, that the reference is to the *whole being*, and not to a separate principle.

A like instance of the injury done to the Scriptures by the retention of phrases which do not convey the original meaning, occurs in the 1st Book of Kings, where common sense points out that the word "*life*" should have been inserted instead of "*soul*;" from an inattention to which is to be dated whatever confusion or misconception may have been attached to the passage: "And it came to pass, that the son of the woman, the mistress of the house, fell sick; and his sickness was so sore, that there was no *breath* left in him*." From this relation, it may be observed, that it is not quite apparent whether or not the child was actually dead; as it appears, that after Elijah's prayer he "*revived*;" though in either case the miraculous power exercised by Elijah is established; and in either case, too, the translation conveys an erroneous idea: "And she said unto Elijah, What have I to do with thee, O thou man of God? art thou come unto me to call my sin to remembrance, and to slay my son? And he said unto her, Give me thy son. And he took him out of her bosom, and laid him upon his own bed. And he stretched himself upon the child three times, and cried unto the Lord, and said, I pray thee, let this child's *soul* (i. e. breath, or life, or vigour) come into him again. And the Lord heard the voice of Elijah; and the *soul* (the breath, or life, or vigour) of the child came into him again, and he *revived*." An instance further illustrative of this case occurs in the 1st of Samuel, where an individual that had been engaged in battle, and fatigued, "*revives*;" and when

* 1 Kings, xvii 17, 18, &c.

he had partaken of food, "HIS SPIRIT came into him again." David's men "found an Egyptian in the field (fatigued), and brought him to David, and gave him bread, and he did eat; and they made him drink water; and they gave him a piece of a cake of figs, and two clusters of raisins: And when he had eaten, his *spirit* came again to him: for he had eaten no bread, nor drunk any water three days and three nights*."

So that, whether on the supposition of the widow's son having been actually dead, or otherwise, will the Immaterialists contend that an immortal soul had escaped from within him, and that, upon the prayer of the prophet, it came to him again? or will they not be satisfied with the view that respiration having been suspended, either partially or otherwise,—it being miraculously restored to him, his lungs were operated upon by the air, and he again breathed, and lived.

The word *spirit*, as it occurs in the common version, will be found, no less than that of *soul*, to have misled Scriptural inquirers: much stress having been laid upon the following and similar passages, merely because this term is to be found therein, without any consideration as to the latitude of interpretation, or any view as to the connexion in which it stands. "In thee, O Lord, do I put my trust; for thou art my rock and my fortress. Into thine hand I commit my *spirit* (my life): Thou hast redeemed me, O Lord God of truth†." If we proceed connectedly with the Psalmist's address, it will be found clearly to relate to *temporal* adversity, and that it is not of an immortal soul or spirit, but of himself—entirely, not in part—that he is speaking: "I will be glad, and rejoice in thy mercy, for thou hast considered my trouble; thou hast known my *soul* (thou hast known my mind—

* 1 Sam. xxx. 11, &c.

† Psalm xxxi. 5, &c.

thou hast known *me*) in adversities :” therefore, because of my knowledge of thy mercy—because thou hast considered me in my trouble—because I know “how great is thy goodness,” with full reliance upon that mercy and upon that goodness, I commit “my spirit” (my life) into thine hand ; for “I put my trust in the Lord.”

The next passage occurs in the Book of Ecclesiastes, and it is one upon which much reliance is placed. “Remember thy Creator in the days of thy youth, while the evil days come not ; when thou shalt say, I have no pleasure in them. In the day when the keepers of the house shall tremble, and the strong men shall bow themselves,—then shall the dust return to the earth as it was ; and the *spirit* (life—breath) shall return unto God, who gave it*.” From this passage Steffe† contends, in reply to Bishop Law, that Solomon here clearly recognizes the distinction between soul and body, by saying, that the dust shall return to the earth, and the spirit to God who gave it. The exhortations of “the Preacher,” if such were his object, fail not only in distinctness of expression, but also in consistency with his own teaching. Look at the design of that part of his address in which these expressions occur ; it was to impress upon men the importance of remembering their Creator in the days of their youth, as such remembrance only would lead them to happiness. Where, and when ? In a future and immortal state of existence ? No, but here on earth ; until that period when the dust, or frail materials of which they were composed, should return to the earth from whence it came, and “their life (or spirit) return to God who had given it :” a mode of expression naturally arising from the circumstances of the case ; and,

* Eccles. xii. 1, 7, &c.

† *Two Letters on an Intermediate State*, by John Steffe.” P. 71—75 ; edit. 1758.

among other passages, in accordance with, and illustrative of, the language of the Psalmist, who exhorts his hearers that they should trust only in God, and not in man—"for man's *breath* goeth forth, and he (that is, the whole, not a part of man) returneth to his earth; in that very day his thoughts perish*:" consequently, if his *thoughts* thus perish, then must his *soul* perish; for it is the soul, and not the body, which is said to be the cause, as well as the depository of the thoughts. In what condition, then, is the inherent *immortality* of this soul, which perishes in that very day in which the body returns to the dust?

The passage in the Book of Numbers, in which Moses and Aaron address the Supreme Being as the "God of the *spirits* of *all* flesh †," has been advanced, with much confidence, by the Immaterialists: but they have conveniently glided over the word ALL, when in fact it contains the very *gist* of the remark; placing, as it does, the cause of life throughout *the whole animal creation*, upon the *same* foundation; the Deity being described as the God of the *spirit*, or *life*, of *every* living thing, whether man or beast; consistently with which, the author of the Book of Ecclesiastes, when dilating, in the earlier part of his work, upon creation, draws this conclusion; namely, "that which befallerh the sons of men, befallerh beasts: as the one dieth, so dieth the other; *yea, they have all one* breath (or spirit); so that a man hath no preeminence above a beast;" "ALL go unto one place; ALL are of the dust, and ALL turn to dust again ‡." His very argument, as we have seen, is, that at the moment of death there is no longer any difference between man whose breath goeth upward, and the beast whose breath goeth downward to the earth. Yet this writer, and in this very passage too, has been

* Psalm cxlvi. 4.

† Numb. xvi. 22.

‡ Eccles. iii. 19, &c.

triumphantly quoted in favour of the existence of an immortal soul in man.

Again, to quote from the same authority, "The living know that they shall die : but the dead know not any thing, neither have they any more a reward*." But if Solomon had believed, or intended to inculcate the belief, in an immortal soul, could he thus have argued? And, if man be animated by a spirit; if that spirit be distinct from, and independent of the body; if further, it be in its own nature immortal; and if, on the return of the body to the dust from whence it came, the spirit, thus intellectual, independent, and immortal, goes *literally* to God,—then Solomon's conclusions are false, and inconsistent with his own premises; for we then have that within us which *does* "know" something when the body is dead, and which *has* a "reward" beyond the grave. Taking, indeed, the passages in Ecclesiastes as referring to an immortal soul or spirit, they would be full of absurdities and contradictions: they would teach that man, in point of duration of life, *has* a superiority over the brute, and, at the same time, declare that he has no such superiority; they would assert that beyond the grave there is no existence, and yet inculcate a belief that beyond the grave man shall have an eternal existence. But these are absurdities and contradictions introduced by commentators only; the passages themselves being written ages *before* Jesus had "brought life and immortality to light;" and they simply refer to, and moralize upon, the mortality of man, *in common with the beast*, and the consequent brevity of human life and human enjoyments.

From the teaching of Solomon, I pass on to the words uttered by Stephen immediately preceding his death, in which the doctrine of the soul's leaving the body has

* Eccles. ix. 5.

CHAPTER IV.

THE TEACHING OF THE APOSTLES.

“All those fine-spun notions of the immateriality of the soul, and all the artificial deductions from that principle, teach nothing but the art of blowing scholastic bubbles, which will certainly go peaceably to their rest, without the least detriment, either to sound learning or true religion.”—*Archdeacon Blackburne*.

It is contended that the apostles of Jesus, on some occasions; appear to sanction, by their language, a belief in the doctrine of the immortality of the soul; and while the passages which are deemed to aid this position are not numerous, they are yet considered to possess rather a formidable character. Such an estimation of them, however, is caused principally by the disregard of a rule, which is indispensable in Scriptural, or indeed in any other criticism,—that of viewing literal expressions as such, and figurative ones as figurative, and at all times allowing plain and definite passages to illustrate those which may be, from various causes, less so; bearing also in mind, as far as the Old Testament is concerned, the statement of Dr. Kennicott, “that the present English version frequently expresses *not what the translators found in their Hebrew text*, but what *they thought should have been there.*” The applicability of these remarks will also be seen upon a reference to the language of the New Testament, in which the principles and genius of revelation are

often designated as “LIFE” or “SPIRIT;” and those who embraced the advantages connected with that system, are said to have “passed from death (a state of condemnation) unto life (a state of pardon), from the power or influence of Satan (of worldly pursuits or principles) unto God.”—Of the principles which Jesus delivered, it is said, “they are spirit, and they are life*.” And to those who embraced such, there was “now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, (in Christianity), who walk not after the flesh (the principles of the world), but after the spirit (the principles of revelation) †. The power of man is also contrasted with that of God;—the one, it is shown, may destroy our present existence; but that God, besides that, can also “take away” the hopes and rewards of the Gospel: thus, the apostles of Jesus are exhorted not to fear man, whose greatest effort could only destroy their body, or present life; but rather to fear Him whose power extended equally over their future as well as their present existence; and who, besides annihilating their body, could likewise withhold that future life (or soul) which the Gospel had promised to them, and over which man’s power and influence could not extend.

In the free use of figurative language, Jesus exclaims to the multitude, “Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of Man, and drink his blood, ye have no life (no soul) in you. Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life. Whoso eateth me, even he shall live by me.” † It is clearly his principles which they were exhorted to eat and to drink; and by such eating and drinking, believers (and *believers alone*) had then *within them* the “*life*,” or “*spirit*,” thus described. So also the apostle Paul, when writing to the Corinthian church, at a time when it was disordered both

* John vi. 63.

† Rom. viii. 1.

‡ John vi. 53, &c.

in discipline and morals, addresses its members as “God’s husbandry;—ye are God’s building, ye are the temple of God—the SPIRIT OF GOD dwelleth IN YOU.” And the same writer still more strongly urges upon them, that they should flee from every sin, and that they should bend all their energies to the performance of the will of God, because their “body was not for fornication, but for the Lord, and the Lord for the body:—What, know ye not that your bodies are members of Christ?” And therefore purity, as well as perfect devotedness to godly principle, both of their “souls,” “minds,” and “bodies,” (i. e. the whole of their energies) was indispensable; thus using for the purpose of increased impressiveness, a mode of amplification frequent in the Scriptures; as in the instance of Jesus when, explaining to the lawyer that to love God was the greatest commandment, he adopts this beautiful and forcible mode of expression, “Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, with all thy *soul*, with all thy mind, and with all thy strength,”—that is, with a perfect devotedness of purpose; and not as the Immaterialists, were they consistent, would contend, that they were, firstly, to love God with all their *hearts*; secondly, with all their *souls*; thirdly, with all their *minds*; and fourthly, with all their *strength*; which were parts and parcels of the same man; and, in addition to such consequences,

If because of the occurrence of the terms “*soul*” and “*body*,” even in the admitted instance of the description, referring to but *one* and the *same person*, that we are therefore, and as a matter of necessity, to allow that there are *two* natures in man; then, in addition to the cases already quoted, and upon the same principles of Scriptural criticism, Paul, it may be said, teaches not two but *three* natures in man; for he acquaints the Thessalonians that he prays God their “whole *spirit*—and *soul*—and *body* be

preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ*.” Other most important passages, too, of the exhortations of Paul, must, if Immaterialism be admitted, suffer a like perversion. Thus believers at Corinth must have had literally *within* them the Holy Ghost, (which the same parties tell us is a part of the God-head,)—“for your bodies are the temples of the Holy Ghost (*Holy Spirit*, referring to the possession of spiritual gifts, which, in the apostolic age, were conferred *only* upon *believers*; and, in connexion with such gifts, what may be esteemed the “*fruits of the spirit*,” or devotion of mind to Christian principles, was that “spirit,” or “life,” or “soul,” which *they* possessed,) *which is in you*, which ye have of God, for you are not your own, you are bought with a price; therefore glorify God *in your body*, and *in your spirit*, which are God’s” (in your whole mind and character)†. Here the consistent immaterialist, who claims support for his doctrine by virtue of the word “*soul*” occurring in the common translation, will not receive aid from the Apostle: Glorify God *in your body*, that gross, inert, sluggish matter, which is incapable either of life or thought; and this body, too, is God’s. This they would and must contend is inadmissible; and even Mr. Abernethy‡, aided by the Christian Advocate, would find it difficult to reconcile it with that doctrine which was taught by “Socrates, Plato, and a host of others,” and which jointly they, as Christians, “glory” in defending. It is, however, strictly Scriptural, in idea as well as in expression, and in strict correspondence with the language of Jesus (as recorded by Matthew,) to his Apostles, when he was about to send them forth to proclaim the Gospel amid persecution and privation, and to aid them in enduring which, they were exhorted not to

* 1 Thess. v. 23.

† 1 Cor. vi.

‡ Abernethy’s *Lectures*.

fear man, but to fear God, who had power equally over their present and future life. "Fear not them that kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul, (i. e. "the life,"—the future life; the conferring or the withholding of which must exclusively be an act of almighty power,) but fear Him which is able to destroy both body and soul in hell*" (the grave.†)

This exhortation, so suited to and required by the parties to whom it was addressed, occurs at that period of the mission of Jesus when he had selected his twelve disciples; and, having given them power to perform miracles, they were sent forth as "sheep in the midst of wolves;" and they were to beware of men, for such would deliver them up unto the councils, and "they will scourge you in their synagogues; ye shall be brought before governors and kings for my sake. But when they deliver you up, take no thought how or what ye shall speak; for it shall be given to you in the same hour what ye shall speak: for it is not ye that speak, but the spirit of the Father which speaketh in you: but when they persecute you in one city, flee ye into another. Fear them not; for he that loseth his life for my sake shall find it‡." That is, he that loseth his present life in propagating my principles, shall find another life in the future which man cannot destroy: therefore fear not them whose utmost power is thus defined and

* Matt. x. 28.

† HELL, "In Hebrew *Scheol*; this word most commonly signifies the grave."—Cruden's *Concordance*, article HELL. "The word *Hell* is of Saxon extraction, and signifies a covered place; from the same original we still retain, in our language, the word *heal*, or *hele*, which signifies to cover over."—Rees's *Cyclopaedia*, article HELL. "It is certain that the Greek word we render *Hell* does properly signify no more than a place that is withdrawn from our view."—Goadby's *Bible*, note on Luke xvi. 23.

‡ See Matt. x. Luke xii.

circumscribed. And partly in correspondence with these views those who received the principles of Jesus, and the hopes consequent upon them, are considered as having that "*within*" them which is *spirit*, or *soul*, or *life*; for "*the words that I speak unto you they are spirit and they are life*;" therefore fear Him only, whose power can at once annihilate your present life, and also that spiritual life which consists in and is built upon the principles and hopes of the Gospel. The whole scope and object of the address of Jesus being to direct them to proclaim the approach of the Messiah's kingdom,—to apprise them of the persecutions, and perhaps even death, which would await them in their ministry; and, at the same time, to give them the strongest encouragement to persevere, assuring them that the Divine Being was their guide and protector; that their labours and privations were taken cognizance of by him; that everything in creation was under his superintendance, and that even a sparrow did not fall to the ground without his knowledge, they therefore were to rely upon God; to confess Jesus before men, in order that he might confess them before his Father which was in heaven; consequently they were to bear with every privation and suffering, not fearing man, whose utmost malignity and wickedness, or ignorance, could only inflict present evil, but to fear Him who possessed a power which no human means could reach or affect.

That these are faithful representations of the character and object of this memorable address of Jesus is further supported by the corresponding passage in Luke, in which all the points important to the case are related, and yet neither the word *soul*, nor the destruction of that soul "*in hell*," there occur. "Be not afraid of them that kill the body, and after that have no more that they can

do: but I will forewarn you whom ye shall fear; fear Him, which after he hath killed hath power to cast into hell (the grave); yea, I say unto you, fear Him*.” And let it be observed, that this was an address to the Apostles *only*; hence its necessity and its appropriateness: and I may remark, in passing, that the very terms of this address strictly accord with the *materiality*—the *mortality* of the frame of man; but, according to the Immaterialists, the *soul* does not “descend to the grave,” so that I may well leave them to explain how that can be *killed* which is immortal; besides which, as the admitted object of the address was to encourage the Apostles to bear up against that which awaited them by every evil that man had the power to inflict, it could supply no motive to them to be warned to fear him who could destroy their soul in the grave; for, if the doctrine of Immaterialism be Scriptural, the soul never is deposited in the grave—it cannot be destroyed there—being in its own nature *indestructible*; and is it not understood, even of the power of the Deity, that he could as easily destroy himself, as that which is *inherently immortal*? So that whatever obscurity may have appertained to this passage, it is chiefly chargeable upon the translators for the use thus made of the term *soul*; and that too without regard to their own consistency: for, in a case precisely similar, they render into English a corresponding address of Jesus, “Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor for your body, what ye shall put on: *is not your life* more than meat, and your body than raiment †?” With a correct understanding of the terms *life* or *soul* or *spirit*, there is but little difficulty in the preceding cases, nor in the expressions of Jesus: “If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me:

* Luke xii. 4.

† Matt. vi. 25.

for whosoever will save his life shall lose it; and whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it; for what is a man profited if he gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? (lose that future *life* before promised to those, who could, if necessary, sacrifice even their present life, for (in the words of Mark,) “my sake and the Gospel’s”) or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul*?)” But had Jesus in this address had any view towards the doctrine of an immortal soul, and were we compelled to follow the common translation, how singularly out of place would have been the reasoning! Thus from the conclusion of the observations of Jesus as recorded by Mark, the “soul” spoken of is not an immaterial principle, but the gift of a future life.—“For whosoever shall lose his life for my sake and the Gospel’s, the same shall save it; and whosoever shall be ashamed of me and my words, of him shall the Son of man be ashamed when he cometh in the glory of the Father with all his holy angels†” (messengers); the whole being in connexion with the address to the Apostles, at the time when Jesus began to show them that he must “go unto Jerusalem and suffer many things of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed and be raised again the third day‡;” when Peter rebuked him, saying, “Be it far from thee, Lord.” Jesus proceeds to condemn the fears of the Apostles, showing them that if they would “come after” him, to “deny” themselves, to “take up their cross and follow him,” and even be prepared to lay down their lives, if they desired and “longed” for future existence. Well, indeed, might the Messiah exclaim, What is a man profited if he gain the whole world and lose the assurance of such a futurity!

There are some minor passages in the writings of the Apostles in which the salvation of souls is spoken of, but in a

* Matt. xvi. 24—26. † Mark viii. 35, 38. ‡ Matt. xvi. 21.

different sense to that of those which have been referred to, though equally requiring explanation. James, in addressing the “twelve tribes scattered abroad,” exhorts them to be perfect and entire, wanting nothing; and if any wanted knowledge, they were to “ask of God, who giveth to all men liberally;” but to obtain that for which they asked, it was essential that they should lay apart “all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness, and receive with meekness the engrafted word which is able to save (deliver) your souls” (deliver your persons—deliver you*). The Apostle is not addressing the twelve tribes upon *future* salvation, but in regard to *deliverance* from that state of death or condemnation under which the Jews then laboured, and from which they could only be emancipated by faith (belief) in the Gospel. In a corresponding sense Peter calls to the minds of believers that they *had* received, not *were* to receive, the “salvation of their souls,” a deliverance not communicated to nor possessed by, but “sought diligently” after by the prophets. “Yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory: receiving the end of your faith (belief), even the salvation (deliverance) of your souls (of your persons—of yourselves); of which salvation the prophets have inquired and sought diligently†.” *Believers* alone were those who had received this salvation, and that not from natural, but from moral death, or a state of condemnation; then it is said, those who in times past “had walked according to the course of this world; and *you* hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins‡;” and it should seem from the disorders in the Corinthian church, that at least for a season, they had failed to appreciate their deliverance, for it was commonly reported that “among them there was such iniquity as was not even named

* James i. 21.

† 1 Peter i. 8, 9, 10.

‡ Ephes. ii. 1.

among the Gentiles;” and Paul, though “absent in body but present in spirit (in mind),” had judged of him that had so done this deed, “deliver such a one unto Satan (the adversary, the world) for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus*.” From this passage it has been contended, that “there is a spirit, distinct from the material man, which will be saved:” in this case, however, as in every other of real or assumed difficulty, the Scriptures themselves supply the best explanation, and from them it will appear that the incestuous individual in question was to be excluded from communion with the Corinthian church.

This exclusion it was which constituted the delivering unto Satan—(or the world)—that the destruction of the flesh was not, as the immaterialist contends, the “destruction of the material man,” but that of the evil principles and practices of the flesh, as contrasted with those of the Gospel. This view appears to be further illustrated in the writings of the same Apostle to the church at Rome, “There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh but after the spirit: for they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh, but they that are after the spirit, the things of the spirit; *but ye are not in the flesh, but in the spirit*, if so be that the *spirit* of God dwell in you; now if any man have not the *spirit* of Christ, he is none of his †.” Upon these and similar passages, no ordinary share of ingenuity has been exerted to torture them into an avowal of Immaterialism: it is however submitted, that they bear no reference thereto, and that their distinct scope and tendency clearly discountenance that doctrine.

We pass on to those passages which embrace Paul’s wishes to leave this “earthly tabernacle;” to that of the

* 1 Cor. v. 5.

† Romans viii. 1. &c.

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* 1 Cor. v. 5.

† Romans viii. 1. &c.

transfiguration; and the assertion of Jesus, that "God is not the God of the dead, but of the living." In regard to the first, it is apparent that such were Paul's desires; and the following seems to be the evidence upon which such desires were probably and rationally founded; dwelling, as his mind must have done, on the Divine conduct towards those of his predecessors, who had been faithful and devoted servants of God, as in the cases of Enoch, Elijah, and Jesus, who were favoured with an immediate futurity, and the cause of their being so honoured having clearly resulted from their faithful performance of the Divine will; which would thus act as a reward to them on the one hand, and a stimulus to others who were divinely commissioned to follow in their footsteps; so that in the instances of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Moses, we have only the evidence of probability that they were blessed with an *immediate* futurity. Of Moses, indeed, the fact of his appearing with Elijah to Jesus in the "holy mount," is strongly calculated to aid the opinion that he was numbered among those who were "clothed upon" with immortality. Paul, therefore, knowing of the existence of Enoch, Elijah, and Jesus, and if the other prophets of God were also then in existence, doubtless he with equal certainty was acquainted therewith; added to which, as all the Apostles had to perform a very extraordinary and self-devoted part in the establishment of the Gospel, and they had received upon several occasions Divine communications, it would seem to correspond with the conduct of God towards their predecessors, and the principles of his general government, that *they* also, if they continued equally faithful unto the end, should be made partakers of the like privilege.

With these ideas, I recur to the statement of the sufferings which Paul and his fellow Apostles endured, as re-

corded in the Corinthians; “We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed; always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus: we are confident and willing to be absent from the body and present with the Lord*.” And, in the Philip-
 pians, the same Apostle’s earnest expectation and hope is that Christ should be magnified in his body, “for to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain; for I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to *depart* and to be with Christ, which is far better†.” Such being the passages which are construed as before stated, it is submitted that the expression of a wish “to be present with the Lord,” or a “desire to depart to be with Christ,” so far from according with Immaterialism, really discountenances that doctrine; for if he had been animated by an immortal soul, then all such objects were *secured* to him, and that not by any especial favour of God, but by having that within which was *naturally* immortal.

Besides these considerations, it should seem probable from two memorable facts in the life of Jesus, as recorded by John, (the first of which is an address to the Apostles, after what is termed the last supper; and the other that of his prayer to God for them,) which tend strongly to support the view of an *exception* being made in *their* instances, and of their being privileged with an immediate resurrection. “Let not your hearts be troubled: ye believe in God; believe also in me: in my Father’s house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you: *I go to prepare a place for you*‡.” “As thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world; and the glory which thou gavest me, I have given them: Father, I will that they also whom thou hast given

* 2 Cor. iv. and v.

† Phil. i.

‡ John xiv.

me, *be with me where I am*, that they may behold my glory which thou hast given me*.”

Combining, therefore, these several views, the most rational conclusion would seem to be, that the Apostles, together with the prophets, were thus *exclusively* distinguished; and although Paul did not, at the time when this address and prayer were delivered, form a part of their body, yet he was when converted, and also afterwards, in communication with Jesus, and, doubtless, he would participate with the eleven in their high and distinguished rewards. Thus the desires of the Apostle, while they give no countenance to Immaterialism, appear to rest upon a solid basis; and they harmonize, too, with the address and the prayer of Jesus, either of which is irreconcilable with the doctrine of the immortality of the soul, as, in addition to its incompatibility with the whole scope of these passages, the belief in it by Paul would constitute his anxiety to depart, a mere impatience of life; for if he had within him an immortal soul, then, as an inevitable consequence, he was certain of an immediate re-existence, and that too by a principle possessed merely in common with every other human being, and, consequently, not capable of operating upon his mind as a privilege of a *peculiar* and generally *exclusive* character; as one which could administer support under sufferings, and impel him on to make every sacrifice and exertion.

The conversion of Paul, as well as his anxiety to be with Christ, is, with palpable inconsistency, held to support Immaterialism; to meet which, I refer to the facts as related by himself, and which, it will be seen, are confined to a statement of the exalted nature of the communication with which he had been favoured. “I knew a man in Christ about fourteen years ago, whether in

* John xvii. 24.

the body, I cannot tell; or whether out of the body, I cannot tell: God knoweth; such a one was caught up into the third heaven." This relation is stated by the Apostle at its commencement, to be "a vision of the Lord:" and these questions may be put to those who labour to support their hypothesis, even from a *vision*; If we are to take this passage literally, that Paul, at his conversion, was really in, what they understand by the third heaven? Can "gross," "sluggish," "medullary matter," be an inhabitant of heaven? for, to maintain consistency of explanation, it might have been so; as Paul states, that he does not know whether he was not there "in the body:" on the other hand, if he literally was in the third heaven "out of the body," where was the body during the period? and, as it is quite certain it was not dead, what becomes of the doctrine which maintains that it is the soul alone which gives *life* to the body, and that when the soul is removed from the body the latter becomes a mass of dead matter?

A passage, in its own nature plain and definite, and which requires no common powers of mystification to pervert, occurs in most of the writings of the Scriptural defenders of Immaterialism; among others, Dr. Jortin asserts, that the words of Jesus*, "God is not the God of the dead, but of the living," were words spoken by our Saviour, with a view to establish the doctrine of the soul's immortality†." A reference, however, to the connexion which gave rise to the remarks in question, will probably be the best mode of ascertaining their correct meaning. It appears that the Sadducees, who denied that there would be any resurrection, put a question to Jesus in support of their opinions, to which he replied, "Ye do err, not knowing the Scriptures, nor the power of God; for, as touching

* Matt. xxii. 32.

† 19th Sermon, vol. ii.

the resurrection of the dead, have ye not read that which was spoken unto you by God, saying, I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob? God is not the God of the dead, but of the living*." Here both the question and the reply is distinctly, and to the exclusion of every other subject, "the resurrection of *the dead*;" and the parties who put the question, not only denied a resurrection, but also said, "that there is neither Angels or Spirits." It consequently must be apparent, that had Jesus been a teacher of the doctrines of angels and spirits, and more especially if such doctrines bore that relation to the resurrection which Immaterialists aver, then the Sadducees would have naturally availed themselves of so favourable an opportunity to attempt to puzzle Jesus; and it is inconceivable, in that case, that he should not have advanced such, as affording evidence of the doctrine of a future life, and with some such reply as this, Ye do err, not knowing the Scriptures; for have ye not read that you have an immortal soul within you which cannot die?

Passing on to the point in regard to the Deity being—not the God of the dead, but of the living, and that "the dead are raised, even Moses showed at the bush when he called the Lord, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob†." *First*, the mortality of the *whole man*, consequently his *materiality*, is here distinctly avowed; and, if we have an immortal soul, then we can know nothing of a resurrection, which is a re-living—a re-existence; and, as the soul cannot die, *it*, as a consequence, cannot "rise from the dead." *Secondly*, that Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, either have risen or will rise. That the former opinion is probable will be seen in the remarks connected with the Apostle Paul; but if the latter be esteemed the more correct one, it will equally support in this passage, that which is here

* Matt. xxii. 29, &c.

† Luke xx. 38.

contended for, and scripturally correspond with the expression, that “God is not the God of the dead, but of the living,” *i. e.* of those who will hereafter be raised to life, and who are now spoken of as living in the view and decree of God*; and thus according with a passage in the Romans, that Abraham is the father of all believers, “As it is written, (I have made thee a father of many nations,) even God, who quickeneth the dead, and *calleth those things which be not* (*i. e.* have not yet, but are in the determined council and foreknowledge of God designed to take place,) *as though they were*†;” (who regards the future Resurrection as if it were present‡.) Thus, upon either view of the case, whether Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob *be* living or *are to* live, Dr. Jortin’s conclusion is unsupported; and the words of Jesus, so far from proving, tend to *disprove* Immaterialism.

Under the same division of this controversy is ranked what is denominated the Transfiguration, and from thence is assumed the very point in debate; for “the Evangelist informs us, ‘Moses and Elias came and conversed with Jesus, and were seen and heard by those disciples who were present: as to Elias, he died not, but like Enoch before him was taken up into heaven; but of Moses it is written that he died and was buried.’ This account, therefore, is a fair intimation that good men continue to live and to act after they are released from this mortal body§.” But to have made the Doctor’s case a good one, it should have been related, that it was the *immortal souls* of Moses and Elias which conversed with Jesus. The qualities of which souls, be it remembered, are defined to be by nature *aërial* and immaterial, consequently not tangible to

* See notes in Unitarian *Version* on this passage.

† Rom. iv. 17.

‡ See Grotius and Beza.

§ Dr. Jortin’s *Sermons*, p. 385.

the touch, nor visible to the sight; yet, in despite of such *inherent* properties, the Doctor admits that they “were *seen* and *heard* by those disciples who were present.” With regard to the Transfiguration, there are two views taken of it: one, that it was a vision; the other, that Moses and Elias did personally appear to Jesus on the holy mount; and whichever view of the transaction be the correct one, they alike fail in assisting the Immaterial doctrine. For if it was a personal appearance, it proves no more than this: That the distinguished messengers of God have been *exclusively* honoured with a continuation of existence; and it establishes the point, that if there are spirits, their properties are inconsistent with what is ascribed to them by the Immaterialist. If, on the other hand, it was a visionary appearance, the Immaterialist must concede, that a communication by vision has no kind of connexion with the existence of spirits, the relation being, that “Jesus took up with him Peter, and John, and James, into a mountain to pray; and behold there talked with him *two men*, which were Moses and Elias, who appeared in glory, and spake of his decease which he should accomplish at Jerusalem*.” And doubtless such a communication was designed for, and must have succeeded in, administering to the mind of Jesus, under all his subsequent exertions and sufferings, the most effectual support. The effect, too, upon the Apostles would seem to have been very important; “For (they declare) we have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eye-witnesses of his majesty; and the voice which came from heaven we heard when we were with him in the holy mount †.”

In regard to the cases of Enoch, Elijah, and Jesus,

* Luke ix. 28.

† 2 Pet. i. 16, &c.

they require but a very brief statement,—indeed, a literal quotation of the historical records will destroy the arguments of the Immaterialist. Of Enoch, it appears, that his days “were three hundred, sixty, and five years, and Enoch walked with God, (*i. e.* obeyed the will of God, walked in obedience to and had full confidence in God, “led a godly life,” “was well pleasing to God*,”) he was not, for God took *him* (not his soul) away †.” Of Elijah it is related, that when walking with Elisha, “*he* (not his immortal soul) went up into heaven” (the air ‡); and of Jesus, that when he had ended instructing his Apostles, and he “had spoken these things,—while they beheld, *he* (not an immaterial spirit) was taken up, and a cloud received *him* (not his soul) out of their sight §.” Now, if futurity can only be entered upon by immaterial spirits, “when released from this mortal body,” how, or by what means, can it be accounted for, that the Bible historians should have omitted to state a fact so important; and that, also, in three most memorable cases, when the relation was inseparable from a faithful narration? But, in addition to this circumstance, when Jortin’s position is carried to its conclusion, it will be seen, that, if we are animated by an immortal spirit, he himself is the opponent of his own doctrine, by which, if it be true, not merely Enoch and Elijah, and “other good men continue to live and to act,” but *all* men, without distinction or discrimination, alike and immediately continue to live and to act when “released from this mortal body,” and that, too, without regard to the declaration of Jesus, that “a time will come (not *now is*, or as yet ever has been,) when all that are in their graves shall hear the voice of

* See Geddes’s Translation and notes,

† 2 Kings ii. 11, &c.

‡ Gen. v. 23, 24.

§ Acts i. 9.

the son of God, and come forth; they that have done good to the resurrection of life, and they that have done evil to the resurrection of damnation*'' (condemnation).

The remaining points are those which relate to the belief (at least on the part of some,) of the Apostles in the existence of spirits, and the fact that Jesus did not expressly and specifically correct such impressions. Rightly to appreciate this argument, it is necessary that we should recur to the situation of Jesus, and to the *distinct objects* for the promulgation of which he was commissioned; such being to announce the divine promises towards man—the removal of the ceremonial parts of the Mosaic institutions—the proclaiming forgiveness of sins upon repentance—and the preparing men for the enlargement of that Church which should know neither Jew nor Greek, and which should cause all nations of the earth to be blessed; and, finally, “to bring life and immortality to light:”—these being the mighty and all-important facts which the Messiah was commissioned to proclaim, we are not to look to his teachings as to an Encyclopedia, neither are we to expect from them that to which they lay no claim. A revelation from God, of the comprehensive kind referred to, would, indeed, have been inconsistent with the development of intellect and individual exertion, to excite which ever appears characteristic of the divine government; besides which, the communications enumerated above could not fail to establish in the minds of believers conceptions so definite, and principles so correct, that minor points of ignorance would necessarily vanish as the mind gained strength in the express doctrines of revelation. In addition to these views, Jesus, in the use of popular language, had really no choice; and it will be seen that,

* John v. 28, 29.

upon the admission that his object was to be understood by those whom he addressed, the present case is of a similar description to that of his curing maniacal and epileptical diseases, which were supposed by the Jewish people to be caused by the afflicted parties having within them evil spirits. When such persons were restored to health, it was said that he "cast out" the possessing demon; and, upon some occasions, his own words are, "I command thee to come out:" yet even by the enlightened immaterialist these words, which accord so expressly with the erroneous doctrines of demoniacal possession, are most correctly viewed,—not as teaching such opinions, but merely as being the unavoidable use of the language of his age and country. Thus, even in our own times, the use of words originating in popular ignorance might be supposed easy to be dispensed with; yet even now our astronomers speak and write of the sun's rising and setting, and their meaning is not misunderstood by any, although their words (in the necessity of using which they have but little choice,) express the exact reverse of that which they believe and teach.

A similar use of popular forms of expression occurs when Jesus went to his disciples after his resurrection. They, in common with most of the Jews as well as heathens, believed in angels and spirits; and "they were terrified and affrighted, and supposed they had *seen* a spirit."

To have entered into a discussion with them for the purpose of correcting their superstitious opinions in this particular, would have been an abortive and unprofitable effort; besides which, it would have diverted their minds from his chief object, such being to place beyond doubt the fact that he was *the same* Jesus who had been crucified: and this is at once effected, not by discussions upon the absurdities connected with spirits, and demons,

and ghosts, but by meeting them on their own ground, and making a reply which to *them* was unanswerable: “And he said unto them, Why are ye troubled? and why do thoughts arise in your hearts? Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself; handle me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have. And when he had thus spoken, he showed them his hands and his feet*.” By this course his object was instantly gained; for he “opened their understanding, that they might understand the Scriptures; that thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day: and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached unto all nations, beginning at Jerusalem: and ye are witnesses of these things.” So that, in calmly viewing the use by Jesus of popular phraseology, it appears that he had no choice; he must either have done so, or else have been silent: besides which, the difference will readily be admitted, between *referring* to an opinion and *adopting* it; for, in truth, if Jesus on this occasion taught and sanctioned the heathen doctrine of spirits,—then, as a consequence, when he declared “Ye cannot serve God and Mammon,” he in an equal degree asserted the existence of the god Mammon, and consequently was a believer in the heathen mythology. And it may be submitted to the advocates of Immaterialism—how far their cause is aided, or by what authority *they* can avail themselves of that class of popular superstition which confers bodily forms upon spiritual appearances? for, according to *their* theory, the soul is immaterial and aërial, neither tangible to the touch, nor visible to the sight: and, consequently, without some such explanation of the remark of Jesus, their cause will not be supported, nor can they be allowed to avail themselves of the prejudices of those who thought—“they *saw* a spirit.”

* Luke xxiv. 38, &c.

CHAPTER V.

INTERMEDIATE STATE.

“As to the consequences of the present question, it appears, that, on the one side,” (that of materialism,) “there is nothing more than a temporary cessation of thought, which can hurt nobody, except the self-interested papist, whose gainful system of purgatory is by this means overturned, or the self-sufficient deist, whose claim to an inherent principle of immortality is shown to be vain and groundless: but on the other side,” (that of immaterialism,) “there is a manifest derogation from, if not a total subversion of, that positive covenant, which professes solely to entitle us to everlasting life; all proper and consistent notions of death, a resurrection, and future judgement, are confounded; in fine, all the great sanctions of the Gospel rendered unintelligible or useless.”—*Bishop Law’s Theory of Religion, Postscript, 437, 438, &c.*

AN INTERMEDIATE STATE *of conscious and active existence*, which is said to be entered upon immediately at our death, and to continue until the resurrection, will form the subject of this chapter. And, before entering upon the arguments by which this doctrine is advocated, it may be well to premise, that the Scriptures are most clear and distinct in what they communicate relative to man’s future condition; uniformly setting forth that that state is to *commence* at the resurrection,—that we shall not live again till the resurrection,—that mankind will not be judged *before* the resurrection,—that the faith, labours, and suffering of believers are unprofitable and perish if there be no resurrection*. Such being, unequivocally, the doctrines of the Scriptures, the supporters of immaterialism have naturally felt them to be incompatible with their hypothesis: for if an immortal soul be an essential part of a living

* See Law’s *Theory*, Appendix.

man, then, of necessity, future existence *does* commence *before* the resurrection; and the faith, labours, and sufferings of believers do not, nor can they, perish, even if a resurrection never takes place. Thus situated in regard to doctrines so opposed as those of Immaterialism and a Resurrection from the dead, their supporters have had recourse to heathen sources; and from thence, and not from the Scriptures, have deduced an hypothesis, which is thus described: "In the interval between death and the resurrection, there is an Intermediate State, in which the departed souls of the good are supposed to have an imperfect reward, and the souls of the wicked an imperfect punishment." And whilst the Scriptures may be looked to in vain for a description of this "*interval* between death and the resurrection," its origin may readily be discovered among the comparatively consistent immaterialists of the heathen nations, who believed souls to be an emanation of that intellectual fire by which the universe is animated; and that when they are released from the body, they return to God; but that, previously to such return, they have "an interval," by being placed in an "*intermediate state*," for the purpose of being purified from the consequences of their late pollution. So early as the second century, Origen and other "Fathers" incorporated this system with the Christian doctrine of future existence, and from thence the Catholic "Purgatory" was immediately derived; so that this essential branch of the doctrine of immaterialism became one of great influence, and of profit too, to the Romish Church, into which it was introduced by Gregory in the sixth century, was honoured with an *infallible* affirmation in the year 1140, and so continued till the Reformation, when most of the Reformers being content with a small degree of refinement upon Catholicism, merely prohibited prayers for the souls of the deceased.

To such general belief in the truth of immaterialism Luther, in the earlier part of his life, was a singular exception. In his *Defence*, (published 1520,) which was condemned by Leo X., he states, "I permit the Pope to make articles of faith for himself and his faithful, such as that he is emperor of the world, king of heaven, and God upon earth—that the *soul is immortal*; with all those monstrous opinions to be found in the Roman dunghill of decretals*." On the latter point, however, Luther seems to have stood nearly alone: neither does it appear that he evinced much perseverance in its defence, opposed as it was to the decrees of the Church of Rome on the one hand, and to the prejudices of his brother Reformers on the other; and, indeed, the latter announced that "Faith requires that we should think that the dead are not nothing, but that they truly live before God; the pious happily in Christ, the wicked in an horrible expectation of the revelation of divine judgement." But it will be found that anything rather than uniformity of opinion, as to the condition of souls in this "intermediate state," has prevailed and does prevail among its supporters; and that while the decree above quoted appertains to the wicked "an horrible expectation of the revelation of divine judgement,"—Calvin is content to deal only with the souls of "the faithful;" for, "it is nothing to me," he observes, "what becomes of *their souls*," (the wicked,) "I will only be responsible for the faithful." The more modern defenders of the doctrine abound also with contentions with each other; first, as to the place and condition of all souls, whether virtuous or vicious; secondly, as to the union of the same soul with the same body at the resurrection; and thirdly, as to those passages of Scripture which expressly reserve all hopes of future life, of punishment, and of reward,

* Luther's *Defence*.

until the resurrection. Out of these difficulties and contentions have arisen a sect of semi-immaterialists, who, while they succeed in proving that neither reward nor punishment can take place *until* the resurrection, yet they most inconsistently contend that man is animated by a soul; and, for the purpose of reconciling all parties and every inconsistency, they assert that this quality of man, immortal and self-existent as it is, becomes, at the dissolution of the body, partially non-existent, being until the resurrection in a state of sleep or insensibility. To this absurd position Bishop Warburton, who it will be seen was at least *consistent* in his immaterialism, makes a reply possessed of much force: "Their sleep of the soul is mere cant; and this brings me to consider the sense and consistency of so ridiculous a notion. Now sleep is a modification of existence, not of non-existence; so that the sleep of *a substance* hath a meaning—the sleep of *a quality* is nonsense*."

If there is such a state, it is of the first importance that the fact should have been distinctly communicated; and if the doctrine is scriptural, we are entitled to ask for the law and the testimony, and in fairness to require that the passages shall be as clear and as decided, because equally required to be so, (and from being an essential part of the doctrine of futurity, they, if true, would and must be so,) as the declarations of Jesus and his Apostles relative to a resurrection from the dead and of a future judgement. But as some proof of the entire want of such evidence, there is upon record a candid and certainly a very extraordinary confession of one of the ablest defenders of this doctrine, in which, so conscious is the writer of the want of scriptural authority, that he is compelled to admit that "the intermediate state between death and the resurrection is a

* Bishop Warburton's *Strictures on the Sleep of the Soul*.

subject upon which the Scriptures *have not said so much as one could wish**.” From such an admission then, and from such an authority too in this controversy, it will be allowed that, in fairness of argument, the discussion might, as it regards the evidence, nearly terminate; but that there are other defenders of the same doctrine, who, while their arguments prove that they are not in a better condition than the reverend Doctor, yet seem to have either more faith or less ingenuousness than he possessed; and who contend that there are “many expressions of Scripture, in the natural and obvious sense, which imply that an intermediate and separate state is actually to succeed death †.”

On account of its assumed importance, as well as to give effect to the subjoined remarks, I shall quote the whole of the parable of the Rich Man and Lazarus, as recorded by Luke, who thus represents Jesus as addressing his disciples as well as the Scribes and Pharisees:—“There was a certain rich man, which was clothed in purple and fine linen, and fared sumptuously every day: and there was a certain beggar named Lazarus, which was laid at his gate, full of sores, and desiring to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man’s table. The beggar died, and was carried by angels into Abraham’s bosom. The rich man also died, and was buried. And in hell he lifted up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom. And he said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue, for I am tormented in this flame. But Abraham said, Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things: but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented. And beside all this,

* Dr. Jortin’s *Sermons*.

† Dr. Campbell’s *Preliminary Dissertations*, Part II.

between us and you there is a great gulf fixed: so that they which would pass from hence to you cannot; neither can they pass to us that would come from thence*." This parable can admit of but one of two modes of interpretation,—either it must be viewed as figurative, or literal: if the former, then the connexion in which it occurs, the circumstances which gave rise to it, the definite object for which it was delivered, and the admitted character of allegorical instruction,—are essential to its being correctly understood: if the latter, then every circumstance enumerated must be taken *literally* as they are related; and, indeed, so necessary do some of the defenders of an intermediate state esteem a literal interpretation, that, in an answer to Priestley published in 1778, it is stated that “we should never presume to stray from the express, obvious, literal meaning.”

Bound then by such conditions, we look at this parable, and bear in our minds that the soul of man is described by its advocates to be spiritual—not visible to the sight; that it takes its flight immediately upon the dissolution of the body, to inhabit a state which is thus described: that “whilst the good enter into a state of peace and comfort, the wicked are properly condemned to an *insensible condition* till the last day calls them forth†.” *Literally*, then, it appears, that Lazarus,—not an immortal soul, but that the “*beggar*” Lazarus, “*full of sores*,”—was immediately upon his death carried by angels and deposited in the bosom of Abraham;—that the rich man at his death was placed not in an “intermediate state;” not in Dr. Jortin’s “insensible condition till the last day;” but was in hell “*tormented in flame*;”—that the receptacle for the virtuous is so immediately in the neighbourhood of that for the wicked, that the parties can *see* each other,—that

* Luke xvi.

† Dr. Jortin’s *Sermons*.

they can hold familiar conversation together;—that Abraham, though on the other “*side of the gulf*,” and in heaven, is still the “Father” of the wicked in hell; and that the aforesaid wicked are acknowledged by Abraham to be his *sons*: and that, finally, if it be contended that it was not the living, but the immortal soul of Lazarus that was in Abraham’s bosom, and the immortal soul of the rich man that required a drop of water to cool its immortal tongue,—then *immaterial* spirits can be burned by *material* fire; and though not visible to the sight, nor tangible to the touch, could go to the rich man’s “father’s house,” to his five brethren, and could “testify unto them,” lest they also came to the like place of torment.—This, *literally*, is the fair interpretation of this parable, teaching, as it is said to do, “the *immediate* transition of the soul into one or other of these two different states, which is observable in the narration or parable itself, from their death to their succeeding state of happiness or misery*.” And we might, perhaps, leave to our adversaries the solution of their own difficulties, and the reconciling of such direct contradictions in their system as flow from applying this parable to the support of the doctrine of an intermediate state of existence. One, indeed, among their number has felt it judicious not to hazard too large a portion of his faith upon the present parable, and admits, that it is “NOT A REPRESENTATION OF AN INTERMEDIATE STATE, but of the final state of the righteous and the wicked†.” This admission of the reverend immaterialist is completely and to the fullest extent giving up the point in debate: but still it may be shown that it is not even a representation of “the final state of the righteous and the wicked,” much less that for which Macknight puts in a

* See Bulkley’s *Discourses on the Parables of the New Testament*.

† Bishop Warburton.

claim,—“that it teaches us that the souls of men are immortal; that they subsist in a separate state after the dissolution of the body; and that they” (Query—in such state,) “are rewarded or punished according to their actions in this life*.” From the preceding chapter it will be seen that the “*Pharisees and Scribes murmured*” at the teaching of Jesus, and that he “*spake parables unto them;*” this teaching by parables being “that kind of allegory which consists of a continued narration of a fictitious event, applied by way of simile to the illustration of some important truth†.” The design of Jesus in the several parables in the present connexion would appear to be, to show that his attention to “publicans and sinners” was agreeable to the will of God; to expose the self-righteous Jews, who “justified themselves before men;” to correct avaricious dispositions—“for the Pharisees, who were covetous, heard all these things, and they derided him;” and wisely and by gradual steps to exhibit to his disciples and others the true character of God, and exhibit a knowledge of the divine dispensations in developing the covenant with Abraham, by the calling in of the Gentiles. To these objects the present parable and that of the Prodigal Son, with which it is connected, appear to be especially directed:—in the latter the eldest son, in the former the “certain rich man, clothed in purple and fine linen,” are the representatives of the proud and privileged Jew; exactly those characters, some of whom were then near Jesus, and who, though “highly esteemed among men, were an abomination in the sight of God:”—in the one case the outcast son, in the other the despised beggar, appear to be the representatives of the Gentiles. But “the law and the prophets were until John; since

* *Macknight*, vol. ii. p. 294.

† Bishop Lowth’s *Lectures on the Sacred Poetry of the Hebrews*.

that time the kingdom of God is preached, and *every man* presseth into it." (Luke xvi. verse 16.)

The middle wall of partition being thus broken down by the admission into the church (since the proclamation of John) of the Gentiles as well as the Jews, such as entered into it were carried by angels*—by messengers,—that is, by Jesus and his Apostles,—into Abraham's bosom—into the kingdom of God; that kingdom or church which originated with Abraham, and the enlargement of which at the time of Jesus being misunderstood by the Jews, they in their turn became the outcasts. They *had* received their "good things," and the Gentiles their "evil ones;" but now they were comforted, and the Jews were tormented; because they would not hear Moses and the prophets: neither were they persuaded when one *did* rise from the dead.

THE ANGELS WHICH KEPT NOT THEIR FIRST ESTATE, spoken of in Jude, I notice merely because it has been adduced in this controversy; though, as being evidently unconnected with it, that notice will be necessarily brief. "And the angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, he hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgement of the great day." (verse 6.) Whatever opinions the phraseology of this passage may have given rise to, that of authorizing the doctrine of an intermediate state for the souls of men it

* "The word *angel* is not properly a denomination of nature, but of office; denoting as much as *nuncius*, *messenger*, a person employed to carry one's orders, or to declare his will."—*Rees's Cyclopædia*, "ANGEL." "The Greek word we render *angel* does, in its primitive sense, signify nothing more than messenger; and accordingly, in James ii. 25, it is the same Greek word that is rendered *angels* in other passages that is there rendered *messengers*."—See *Goadby*, vol. iv. p. 910.

is not chargeable with; for it speaks *not* of men, *not* of souls, *not* of a state of darkness for the souls of men; nor does it give the slightest countenance to Bishop Bull's general theory,—that “the souls of all the wicked are presently after death in a state of very great misery, and yet dreading a far greater misery at the day of judgment*.”

PREACHING TO THE SPIRITS IN PRISON.—“By which also he” (Jesus) “went and preached unto the spirits in prison; which sometime were disobedient, when once the longsuffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was preparing, wherein few, that is eight souls, were saved by water†.” From these verses it has been contended, that the Apostle *assumes* an intermediate state of conscious existence; but it does not appear to have any reference to an intermediate, or, indeed, to any state of *future* existence. Peter commences his letter by addressing it to the believers “*scattered abroad;*” exhorting them to withstand persecution, such being “the trial of their faith,” (which was “more precious than gold, which perisheth;”) and as an example to them, the sufferings of Jesus are referred to, “that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but

* A correct understanding of this passage will show, that besides being wholly irrelevant to the doctrine of an intermediate state, it is also free from sanctioning another most absurd hypothesis, in support of which it is universally brought,—that of FALLEN ANGELS;—the parties referred to by Jude being the messengers (as recorded in Numbers xiv.) who were sent to spy out the land, and who for bringing up a “false report” lost their “first estate,” or the pre-eminence which as “rulers” they had possessed. For a full and convincing support of these ideas, consult Bekker, and also Goadby's *Bible*, vol. iv. 910, &c.; and for passages illustrative of the peculiar phraseology of the verse, see Job x. 21, &c.; and Acts iii. 24.

† 1 Peter iii. 19, 20.

quicken by the spirit;” that is, raised from the dead by the spirit of God—“by the power of God*.” The same idea is expressed by Paul, though in somewhat different language: “Though he was crucified, yet he liveth by the power of God†:” by which (power or authority) “he went and preached unto the spirits” (PERSONS) “in prison;” or, in other language, to those whose “MINDS” were imprisoned; being in that state of darkness which in the succeeding chapter is represented as one of death: “for the Gospel was preached also to them that are dead‡;” that is, “dead in trespasses and sins.” And thus, such persons—spirits—being morally and mentally in prison, to them Jesus, by preaching (proclaiming) the Gospel, broke their fetters, and released them from prison, in the sense in which moral delivery is spoken of in Isaiah:—“The spirit of the Lord God is upon me, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound §.” Thus a close attention to the connexion becomes essential, and also a reference to the peculiar phraseology; and this will be more fully seen in Isaiah’s prophecy of the mission of him who, in Peter’s language, PREACHED TO THE SPIRITS IN PRISON:—“I the Lord have called thee, and give thee for a covenant of the people, for a light of the Gentiles; to open the blind eyes, to bring out the prisoners from the prison, and them that sit in darkness out of the prison-house||.” Looking, therefore, at the language of corresponding passages as to what the “state” was in which they were placed, and who the spirits were to whom Jesus “preached,” this passage ceases to be of difficult solution. But had not Isaiah thus furnished an easy illustration, the connexion of the Apostle’s

* See Goadby’s *Bible*, vol. iv. p. 863; marginal reading of Barker’s *Bible*; and Wynne’s *Testament*, vol. ii. p. 437. † 2 Cor. xiii. 4.

‡ 1 Peter vi. 1, &c. § Isaiah lxi. 1. || Isaiah xlii. 6, &c.

argument in the after verses would have effected that object; the intention of the writer being to draw a parallel between those persons who were in a state of mental darkness in the days of Noah and in the apostolic age; which intention would have been rendered more obvious, if our translators had introduced a single supplemental word, as they have so frequently done in other instances, to express the sense of the original; and the passage would then have stood thus—"By which he went and preached to the spirits in prison, which sometime"—or, as the original imports, in *former time*—"were disobedient; *as* when once the longsuffering of God waited in the days of Noah," &c. And to complete his parallel, it will be seen the Apostle proceeds to show that the ark was then the means of saving the believers of the antediluvian world, as baptism, or a public acknowledgement of the messiahship of Jesus, was the means of saving the believers in the Jewish world. Such, then, appearing to be the Scriptural import of "*preaching to the spirits in prison,*" we submit that the hypothesis relative to immaterial spirits, and their residence in an intermediate state, has, in this connexion, no countenance. Also, whilst the views of Law, Priestley, and others, in some particulars upon this passage, would seem to be hardly satisfactory, yet their opinions afford no aid to the immaterialists. For although these writers apply it to the Gentiles only, this application of it to both Jews and Gentiles, to *all* in fact whose minds were "*in prison,*" is only a more extensive use of the same principles of argument. And should an exception be taken to these views, from the fact that Jesus did *not* preach to the Gentiles, the reply is ready,—that his authorizing the Apostles to do so will, in Scriptural language, be the same thing. Thus Paul to the Ephesians, "For he" (Jesus) "is our peace, who hath made both one: and came and preached

peace *to you*" (Gentiles,) "*which were afar off*, and to them that were nigh*."

The "SPIRITS OF JUST MEN MADE PERFECT †," and "THE SOULS OF THEM THAT WERE SLAIN FOR THE WORD OF GOD ‡," are the passages which next claim attention. To commence with the former, of which the following explanation has been offered; it "signifies the best state to which an unembodied spirit can come; but that after the day of judgement, spirits will then be embodied; that "as soon as good Christians depart out of this life, they will join the company of them"—(*i.e.* unembodied spirits.) The passage, however, will be seen to fail completely in proving the point for which it is adduced; for it relates to believers, in the *present* state of existence, and to the distinguished honours and privileges to which they are called; and has no reference to immaterial spirits, or to a state prior to the resurrection, in which such spirits will be "*made perfect.*" The writer, in figurative and bold language, exhorts those whom he addresses to "follow peace with all men, without which no man shall see the Lord: looking diligently lest any man fail of the grace of God. . . . For ye are come to the general assembly and church of the first-born, and to God the judge of all;—to the spirits of just men made perfect, and to Jesus, the mediator of the new covenant§." In a corrected translation, this passage reads thus: "Ye are come to the general assembly and congregation of the first-born, and to God the judge of all, and to just men made perfect||." But if this translation be questioned, and the word "*spirits*" retained, still there is not anything in the passage expressive of immaterial existence,

* Ephes. ii. 17, &c.

† Heb. xii. 23.

‡ Rev. vi. 9.

§ Heb. xii. 14, 23, &c.

|| *The Epistles of Paul the Apostle, &c.* by Thomas Belsham, vol. iv. p. 701.

distinct and separate from the entire living man in the present life. Mr. Belsham, however, defends his omission of “*spirits*,” both by a reference to the original, and the use of the term in parallel passages; from which he ably contends, “The spirit of a man, is a man himself; the spirit of God, is God himself*; the spirit of Timothy, is Timothy himself†: the spirits of just men, therefore, are just men themselves. . . . By this interpretation the writer appears to be intelligible and consistent; but if by ‘*the spirits of just men made perfect*’ we understand separate souls in an intermediate state, the observation is not only irrelevant, but it is not true; for in what sense can believers in Christ be said to be *now* introduced into the society of spirits in heaven? or what privilege have they in this respect above good men under the law?‡” And the perfection here spoken of is clearly that which, as members of the “assembly of the first-born,” they ought to attain to, because of the superior privileges the Gospel confers upon them; and can have no reference, as Dr. Priestley has observed in his notes on this passage, to any condition of good men, or of spirits, in a future world.

In the Revelations, the passage in which the writer states, “I saw under the altar the souls of them that were slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held §,” though adduced with much confidence, has not that which perhaps might be conceded to some of the preceding passages,—even the semblance of an argument in its favour; for the “souls” in this case should be “lives;” and then, the representation of such being under the altar, will be seen to be perfectly appropriate; forming, as the verse does,

* See 1 Cor. ii. 11.

† See 2 Tim. iv. 22.

‡ *The Epistles of Paul the Apostle*, by Thomas Belsham, vol. iv. p. 701.

§ Rev. vi. 9.

part of a most highly figurative representation of the opening of the six seals; in which the stars from heaven are said to be falling, and the mountains and islands moving out of their places: and the particular allusion in the sixth verse, appears to be borrowed from the practice at the altar of victims in the temple; at the foot of which altar the *blood* (*the life—the soul*) was poured out, which blood being close to the sanctuary, it was supposed that it apprized God of the sacrifice that had been offered to him, and that he saw it; thus the lives of those who had sacrificed themselves in the cause of Revelation, are here, in bold and beautiful language, described as being under the altar, in the sight of God.

From these passages we turn to one which, chronologically, should have had the precedence,—SAUL AND THE WITCH OF ENDOR*, which some adduce to prove the existence of immortal souls, and also an intermediate state for their reception. Thus, Causin contends that *the return* of souls, as in the case of the prophet Samuel, is appointed by God to prove their immortality. A modern writer also asserts that “we have one remarkable instance of a *phantom*, or appearance, in the form of Samuel the prophet; and it is not improbable that it was the departed *spirit* of Samuel himself, appearing, not by the incantation of the witch, but by the will of God, to denounce his awful vengeance against Israel †.” Patrick maintains that it was an *evil spirit* in the likeness of Samuel that appeared before Saul ‡: and others have supposed that the appearance of Samuel to Saul was a divine miracle §. In forming a judgement of this case, it may be well to glance at the characters

* 1 Sam. xxviii.

† *The Case of Saul*, by Granville Sharpe, p. 155—157.

‡ See Patrick on 1 Sam. xxviii. 12.

§ See Dr. Waterland's *Sermons*, vol. ii. p. 267.

who are represented as acting in it:—First, the king of Israel, who upon disobeying the commands of the Deity was told, that “the Lord had rejected him from being king over Israel,” and who in all his subsequent engagements with the enemies of Israel was uniformly unsuccessful; and the cause of such disasters was known by the whole people to be, that the God of Israel had rejected Saul from reigning over his chosen people; in consequence of which he was oppressed with melancholy, (*i. e.* “an evil spirit came upon him;”) “and when he saw the host of the Philistines, he was afraid, and his heart greatly troubled him: and he inquired of the Lord, and the Lord answered him not. Then said Saul unto his servants, Seek me a woman that hath a familiar spirit, that I may inquire of her.” The second personage in this representation is the woman so selected, one whose occupation agreed with the necromancers of the heathen nations, “who summoned the spirits of the dead to appear before them; and who carried on their trade in subterranean caverns, which were well calculated to ensure successful imposition*.” But the God of Israel had prohibited the exercise of such arts; commanding his people, that “When thou art come into the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee, there shall not be one who maketh his son or his daughter to pass through the fire, or that useth divination, or an observance of times, or an enchanter, or a witch, or a charmer, or a consulter with familiar spirits, or a wizard, or a necromancer; for all that do these things are an abomination unto the Lord, and *because of these abominations* the Lord thy God doth drive them out from before thee †.” The third character assumes to be that of Samuel, whom “all Israel, from Dan even to

* See Michaelis’s *Commentaries on the Laws of Moses*, vol. iv. p. 83—92. 8vo edit. 1814.

† Deut. xviii.

Bersheba, knew to be a prophet of the Lord," and who, when he "died, all the Israelites were gathered together, and lamented him, and buried him in his house at Ramah."

These facts being premised, we approach the chapter under examination, in which the defenders of Immaterialism would fain make God to sanction that which he had solemnly denounced as an abomination in his sight; and which is supposed to confer upon one whom he had commanded to be "cast out of the land," the power to raise from the dead even a prophet of God, and through whose instrumentality, although Jehovah would not answer Saul, "neither by dreams, nor by urim, nor by prophets," yet he is made to answer him by the power of one that had "a familiar spirit:" for it is puerile in Mr. Granville Sharpe to attempt to get over this difficulty by asserting that the communication was not made "by the incantations of the witch, but by some *respectable* agent of the divine will,"—the text being, "Then said the woman (to Saul), Whom shall *I* bring up unto thee? And he said, Bring me up Samuel. And when the woman saw Samuel, *she cried* with a loud voice*," &c. So that to the immaterial system may be well left whatever benefit it can derive from the serious imputations which such an hypothesis casts upon the divine government. Besides which, how can immaterialism be reconciled with the present relation? and how can that which is spiritual and not visible to the sight, be *seen* to be "an old man covered with a mantle"?

But the whole case is clearly one of imposition dexterously practised upon the weak, desponding, and superstitious mind of Saul, and effected clearly by the practice of the art of ventriloquy. "The term '*ventriloquus*' is compounded of *venter*, belly, and *loquor*, to speak; and is

* Deut. chap. xviii. verses 11 and 12.

applied to persons who speak inwardly, so that the voice proceeding out of the thorax seems to come from some distance, and in any direction." See the Work of M. de la Chapelle, published in 1772, in which is shown that in the case of Saul, the speech supposed to be addressed to him by Samuel, proceeded from the mouth of the sorceress of Endor, and that the ancient oracles derived their influence from the exercise of this art; and a reference to the original will tend to aid this view of the case:—the Hebrew of the "*familiar spirit*" of the witch, is "OB," and the plural "OBOTH;" and such persons were afterwards denominated "*Pythonesses*," thereby implying a pretence to divination: accordingly, in the Vulgate version of 1 Sam. xxviii. 7, 8, the word used is "Python:" besides which, the witch must have necessarily known Saul, who "from his head and shoulders was taller than any man" in Israel. Saul throughout the whole performance did not of himself see Samuel; the relation is—"When *the woman* saw Samuel, *she* cried with a loud voice," &c. And Saul said to her, "*What sawest thou?*" And he said unto her, "What form is he of?" And when she had answered the foregoing question, Saul "perceived," or acknowledged from the representation of the witch, that it was Samuel. Thus the deception upon Saul completely succeeded; and *he* "stooped with his face to the ground, and bowed himself." And it is especially deserving of remark, that the whole of the after-relation made to Saul, while thus prostrate before the sorceress, consists in a repetition of what had been *long previously announced concerning his rejection by God, and of the triumph of the Philistines over him*, and which was known to the Jewish people at large. Thus the whole case in reference to Saul admits solely of being viewed, on the part of the witch, as a successful juggle.

“This day shalt thou be with me in paradise” is a favourite passage in this controversy: but it may be shown that it in no way warrants the application made of it; and indeed the genuineness of the passage itself is also a fair subject of dispute. The fact is recorded by Luke only, who was not present, and who probably had not even seen Jesus. It is not mentioned by John, who witnessed the whole scene of the crucifixion. By Mark it is not referred to. Nay, more: it is absolutely contradicted by Matthew, who states that “the thieves” (i. e. *both*) “joined with the priests and those that passed by, in reviling Jesus;” whereas the passage in Luke speaks of one only as reviling, and of the other as being favourable towards Jesus. The critical part of the argument on this subject has been thus shortly but well summed up in a note of the *Improved Version*: “This verse was wanting in the copies of Marcian and other reputed heretics, and in some of the older copies in the time of Origen; nor is it cited either by Justin, Irenæus, or Tertullian; though the two former have quoted almost every text in Luke which relates to the crucifixion, and Tertullian wrote concerning the intermediate state.” The silence of such writers as these, desirous as they constantly were of supporting their Pagan notions by a constant reference to the Christian writers, may be taken as affording strong evidence against the genuineness of the passage; but still, the following explanation has been given of this passage in reference to the meaning of the original word rendered “paradise,” which, to say the least, is extremely ingenious. Of the phrase itself there is a full explanation in Parkhurst, 8vo edition, p. 498. *Paradeisos* was considered by the Greeks as a barbaric phrase, being borrowed by them from the Persians. It has been supposed to be compounded from a Hebrew word *to separate*, and an Arabic one *to hide*, signifying a secret inclo-

sure or a hidden place of separation. Thus in one sense it signified a garden, park, or inclosure (like those of the Oriental monarchs), which are spoken of as “paradises full of everything beautiful and good that the earth can produce.” In this sense the word appears to have been used by the LXX. (Hez. ii. 8; Eccles. ii. 5,) and probably by the writer of the Book of Revelations. The man requested that Jesus should “remember him when he came into his kingdom,” that is, into his *temporal* kingdom, it being absurd to assume that an individual so circumstanced should have more extended views on this subject than the very Apostles themselves. The answer of Jesus, it is held, contains a feeling but dignified reproof; “Verily I say unto thee, Today shalt thou be with me in paradise” (the hidden state); as though he had said, “It is in vain to employ your last moments on subjects of temporal and earthly greatness, when you, like me, shall this day repose in the silence and obscurity of the grave.”

Verses 52 and 53 of the 27th chapter of Matthew, wherein is related that the graves were opened, and the saints arose and went into the holy city, after the crucifixion of Jesus, is clearly an interpolation: for as to who those “saints” were; for what object they arose; to whom they went; by whom they were seen; what they communicated; or what afterwards became of them,—are all points upon which there is not the slightest information: besides which, the statement occurs in one historian only; an omission on the part of the others, which, had it related to some trifling circumstance, would not have required particular remark, but which in so extraordinary an occurrence as this is related to be, cannot, consistently with truth, be easily accounted for. Besides which, even taking the verse as it stands, it is not the *souls* of the

saints in an active state of existence, but “many *bodies* of the saints, which *slept*, arose.”

We have now but very briefly to notice those expressions of the Scriptures which are said to “*imply* an intermediate state;” the first and chief of such being the Scriptural use of the term “sleep;” which is thus argued:—“Death, you say, is sleep. What is sleep? Is the mind, during this torpor of the body, utterly and always void of thought? Death, if it reduces the mind to a total insensibility, must be something more than sleep; for in sleep there is often a strong consciousness at least, if not a *kind of separate existence**.” And it is contended, that “to sleep,” or “to sleep with their fathers,” is only “a state of inaction, or kind of insensibility, during which we still exist†.” To which the reply is offered,—that in the Scriptures, as in other writings, sleep is often used in a figurative sense, to express death: in proof of which, take the cases, first, of Stephen; of whom, when he was put to death, it is said he “fell asleep;” and, secondly, that of Lazarus,—“Our friend Lazarus *sleepeth*; but I go that I may awake him out of sleep. Then said his disciples, If he sleep, he shall do well. *Howbeit Jesus spake of his death*: but they thought that he had spoken of taking of rest in sleep. Then said Jesus unto them plainly, Lazarus *is dead*‡.” So that the play upon the word “sleep” will not be of avail to the immaterialist; for, most clearly, in the passages in debate “death” is *not* merely something more than the word “sleep,” but the latter is figuratively used to express the former. And the Apostle Paul sets this matter completely at rest in his remarks touching

* Steffe's *Letters on Scripture Proofs of a Separate Intermediate State of Existence after Death*, pp. 37, 38.

† *Essay on the Immateriality of the Soul*, in reply to Dr. Priestley, pp. 40, 41, &c.

‡ John xi.

the resurrection; in which there is no evidence to countenance an immediate entrance upon futurity at the moment of death; in which there is no hint given of an intermediate state; but, in which, the fact of the resurrection of Jesus being admitted, then the reasoning is,—not that there *was*, not that there *is* at death, but that there *will be* a future life, and which is made to rest solely on the resurrection from the dead;—if there be no resurrection, “then they also *that are fallen asleep in Christ are perished**.”

It will also be found that the state of death, besides being represented in the Scriptures by the idea of sleep, is also said to place man in that condition in which he is at rest; that it is a “resting place,” a “house,” a state of “silence,” of oblivion, of destruction and corruption †: and thus the following passages have fairly no difficulty or equivocation attached to them—“Thou shalt go to thy fathers in peace‡;” “going to the grave mourning§;” “going down to the pit||;” and numerous parallel passages; the whole of which, however, will be found to be simply and easily explained by the following instances, in which the same expressions are used, and in a corresponding sense. Bathsheba addresses David for the purpose of getting him to appoint her son Solomon to reign over Israel; “Otherwise it shall come to pass, when my lord the king shall *sleep with his fathers*, that I and my son Solomon shall be counted offenders¶.” And in the following chapter the death of David is recorded in corresponding terms: “So David *slept* with his fathers, and was buried in the city of David**.” Again, in Job: “As the waters fail from the sea, and the flood decayeth and

* 1 Cor. xv. 18.

‡ Gen. xv. 15.

|| Isaiah xxxviii. 18.

† See Bishop Law’s *Theory*, p. 388, &c.

§ Gen. xxxvii. 35.

¶ 1 Kings i. 21.

** 1 Kings ii. 10.

drieth up: so man lieth down, and *riseth not*; till the heavens be no more, they shall not awake nor be *raised out of their sleep**.”

Having now glanced at the passages which have been advanced in support of Immaterialism; and having examined the “many expressions that *imply* an intermediate and separate state,” we are placed in a condition to estimate the grounds of Dr. Jortin’s confession,—that of such a state “the Scriptures have not said so much as one could wish;” though, in truth, the Doctor ought to have acknowledged that the Scriptures say *not anything* of such a state, that the futurity which is therein promised is not one which we commence upon immediately at the dissolution of the body, and by virtue of a never-dying principle within us; but that, “when all that are in their graves” (not in an intermediate state,) “shall hear the voice of the Son of man, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of condemnation†.”

* Job xiv. 11, 12.

† John v. 28, &c.

CHAPTER VI.

THE RESURRECTION.

“If the dead rise not, then is not Christ raised; and if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins: THEN THEY ALSO WHICH ARE FALLEN ASLEEP IN CHRIST ARE PERISHED.”—1 Cor. xv. 17, 18.

ADMIT the force of the Apostle’s argument, and the doctrine of the materiality of man follows as an inevitable consequence: for, as has been briefly and clearly stated, “death and resurrection are terms opposed to each other; a real resurrection must be preceded by an actual death; that which does not die, cannot be raised *from* the dead; the resurrection made known in the Scriptures is a resurrection from the dead*.” This view of future existence will be seen directly to emanate from the declarations of Jesus, as well as from the teaching of his Apostles; it having been announced as “the will of him that sent me, that every one that seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life; and *I will raise him up* at the last day†.” And he who from right principles could give entertainment to others, is told to “call the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind: and thou shalt be blessed; for they cannot recompense thee—thou shalt be recompensed at *the resurrection of the just* ‡.” Thus, “the will of him” that sent the Messiah was to make known to the

* See “*The Resurrection from the Dead an Essential Doctrine of the Gospel.*” By R. Wright.—P. 6. 1820.

† John vi. 40.

‡ Luke xiv. 13, 14.

world “everlasting life;” a life, from the very terms of the communication, not derivable from a self-existent, immaterial principle; but from the “resurrection from the dead,” when all that are in their graves shall come forth to the resurrection of life, or to that of condemnation. It was for proclaiming this doctrine, and that too in defiance of both Jewish and Heathen authorities, and even of martyrdom itself, on the part of the Apostles, that the “priests, and the captain of the temple, and the Sadducees came upon them; being grieved that they taught the people, and preached through Jesus” (*not* the immortality of the soul,) “the *resurrection from the dead**.”

The hope of a future state of existence, built upon this foundation, rests not on the belief of an immortal spirit, but solely, and to the absolute exclusion of all other doctrines, upon the divinely authorized declarations of the Messiah, which were illustrated and confirmed by the fact that God had raised the *man* Jesus from the dead; for “if there be no resurrection of the dead, then is Christ not risen; and if Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain. Yea, and we are found false witnesses of God; because we have testified of God that he raised up Christ; whom he raised not up, if so be that the dead rise not†.” So that from the reasoning of Paul it is clear to demonstration, that if future existence depends upon our being animated by an immaterial spirit, the Apostle was not favoured with the knowledge of such a passport to immortality, and he was therefore deprived of a most easy and infallible mode of silencing all gainsayers;—for of what avail to his argument could be the resurrection of Jesus, provided the doctrine of Immaterialism were true? as, in that case,

* Acts iv. 1, 2.

† 1 Cor. xv. 13, 14, 15.

whether the Messiah was raised from the dead, or whether he was not, immortality was alike ensured to *every* man, and that too, upon the showing of the Immaterialist, by an inherent immortality. But the Apostle Paul, as if possessed of a foreknowledge of the perversions which the doctrine of a future state was destined to undergo, has put upon record such views in relation thereto as ought to explode every fallacious theory. Thus, the Thessalonians are told, "I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, as others which have no hope: *for if we believe that Jesus died and rose again*, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him;wherefore comfort one another with these words*." Upon the supposition of all being animated by an immortal principle, how or why should the Apostle, when expressly treating of a future state, and the hopes consequent upon its belief, have omitted all reference thereto? And, upon the same hypothesis, why should the Thessalonians "sorrow"?—why should they have "no hope"? for, whether Jesus had "risen again" or not, that fact could neither retard nor accelerate the future life of immortal souls. But in addition, the Apostle concludes a portion of his argument to the Corinthians, with a remark which should put this question beyond all controversy; for, "if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins. Then they also *which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished!!!* If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable†." Admit this argument, and the Immaterialist who is a believer in Revelation ought in fairness either to renounce his system, or renounce Paul; for the Apostle unequivocally asserts (and indeed his argument can have no weight,

* 1 Thess. iv. 13, 14, 18.

† 1 Cor. xv. 17, 18, 19.

except upon its admission,) the complete mortality of the *entire man*, who, when he has “fallen asleep,” cannot have hopes of again existing, but by means of a resurrection from the dead; the evidence for which was made to rest, not upon an inherent immortality, but upon the fact that the man Jesus had been raised from the dead: for, “if there be no resurrection of the dead, then is Christ not risen.” And in the emphatic language of another Apostle—“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope *by the resurrection of Jesus Christ* from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you*.”

THE FORM AND MANNER OF THE RESURRECTION has long been a subject of considerable disputation; and some of the defenders of Immaterialism have even laboured to make their system accord with the Scriptures, by asserting that the *same* identical flesh and blood from which the soul took its departure at death, will be again animated by the *same soul*, and thereby enjoy immortality†; although Paul has announced, that we “shall be changed;” “that corruption cannot inherit incorruption;” and that we shall be “raised incorruptible.” On the other hand, the enemies of Revelation have not failed to avail themselves of this theory, and have generally thus stated the difficulties with which it is attended: “The same piece of matter may happen to be a part of two or more bodies; as a fish feeding on a

* 1 Pet. i. 3, 4.

† As an example of the mode of reasoning in support of this theory, take the following passage from Addison: “He triumphs in his agonies, whilst the soul springs forward to the great object which she has always had in view, and leaves the body with an expectation of being *reunited* to her in a glorious and joyful resurrection.”

man, and another man afterwards feeding on the fish,—part of the body of the first man becomes first incorporated with the fish, and afterwards in the fish with the last man. Instances have been known of one man feeding upon another; and where the substance of one man is thus converted into the substance of another, such cannot rise with his whole body;—and to which shall the part in common belong?”

Whatever force these objections may have, they are only applicable to those who, in common with the Bishop of Worcester in his controversy with Locke, contend for the resurrection of the *same body*, and will be found to fall perfectly harmless, when applied to the Scriptural doctrine of a future life; “for” (says Locke) “in the New Testament, I find, our Saviour and the Apostles preach the resurrection *of the dead*, and the resurrection *from the dead*; but I do not remember any place where the resurrection of the *same body* is so much as mentioned; nay, which is very remarkable in the case, I do not remember in any place of the New Testament, where the general resurrection at the last day is spoken of, any such expression as the resurrection of *the body*, much less of the *same body*.” And so sensible was Mr. Locke of the importance of the closest attention to Scriptural phraseology in relation to this doctrine, that he records his thanks to his adversary for having, by his opposition, caused him to give to it increased attention: “I must not part with this article of the resurrection, without returning my thanks to Your Lordship for making me take notice of a fault in my Essay. When I wrote that book, I took it for granted, as I doubt not but many others have done, that the Scriptures have mentioned in express terms the *resurrection of the body*; but I now find no such express words in the Scripture as that the body shall rise or be raised, or the resurrection

of the body, and I shall in the next edition change these words of my book, ‘the dead bodies of men shall rise,’ into those of the Scripture—‘*the dead shall rise*’*.” To this accurate and able statement may be appended the well-ascertained facts, that the *same* flesh and blood—the *same* particles of matter—cannot, agreeably to the known laws of nature, be raised in the same person, nor are they essential to constitute the same man; *conscious identity* being the test by means of which the unity, or sameness of any given individual can be preserved; and that, too, even in the present life,—for the human body is continually changing; a man has not entirely the same body today as he had yesterday; and it is computed, that in a comparatively short period, the whole human body undergoes such a change, as that not a particle of the same body remains.

Such being the facts touching the living person, this view of the case will be further aided by a reference to the rapid decomposition of the dead subject, and which Shakespeare thus briefly refers to: “Alexander died, Alexander was buried, Alexander returned to dust; the dust is earth; of earth we make loam, and why of that loam whereto he was converted might they not stop a beer barrel?”

“Imperious Cæsar, dead and turn’d to clay,
Might stop a hole to keep the wind away.”

A future life is therefore not a re-animation of the *same* particles of matter, but a consciousness of prior existence; and it is submitted, that in such consciousness will consist the resurrection of mankind: and as the term “*resurrection*” may be deemed expressive of “*re-living*,” and thereby have a tendency to sanction the idea of the re-animation of the *same* particles of matter, it would be well that generally it should be substituted by “future life,” such change being fully authorized.

* Locke’s *Works*, 8vo, 1824, pp. 348, 349, 367.

The *form* with which we shall rise from the dead would seem of old, as well as in modern times, to have been urged as an objection to a future life; and in the instance of certain sceptics in the Corinthian church, Paul thus states and meets this supposed difficulty: "But some man will say, *How* are the dead raised up? and with *what body* do they come? Thou fool! that which thou sowest is not quickened, except it die; and that which thou sowest, thou sowest not that body that shall be, but bare grain; . . . but God giveth it a body as it hath pleased him, and to every seed its own body*."

From this familiar illustration of the Apostle, much misconception has arisen; chiefly, however, from a mistaken idea, that it was designed as a complete exposition of the doctrine of a future life; when, in fact, it is not for the purpose of proving the resurrection at all, but to answer an inquiry, "with what *body* we should come;"—the view involved in which inquiry Paul meets, by stating that God giveth to all parts of creation, whether animate or inanimate, "whatsoever body it hath pleased him;" and, to all, those bodies which are best suited to the purposes for which he had designed them, to the circumstances in which he placed them, and to the relation which they bear towards the rest of creation. Still one class of modern objectors, from amongst whom may be selected Mr. Paine, thus condemn the reasoning of the Apostle: "Sometimes Paul affects to be a naturalist, and to prove his system of resurrection from the principles of vegetation; but the metaphor, in this point of view, is no simile,—it is succession, not resurrection:—the progress of an animal from one state of being to another, as from a worm to a butterfly, applies to the case; but this of a grain does not, and

* 1 Cor. xv. 35 to 38.

shows Paul to have been what he says of others—a fool*.” A close attention, however, to the argument of Paul would have shown Mr. Paine, that it was not to “*prove* his system of resurrection” that he illustrated his idea by seed sown in the ground; that branch of his argument having been brought to a conclusion in the preceding verses by a reference to the important fact, a fact which the Corinthians admitted, that the Messiah had been raised from the dead:—of the several witnesses in attestation of this fact, the first named was Cephas, then the twelve, then five hundred brethren at once; and last of all, the humble, and devoted, and eloquent Apostle, he being one born of due time; and all, upon the establishment of whose testimony, and not upon the illustration of the seed sown in the ground, Paul “*proves* his system;” and without manifesting a particle of that quality which the author of the *Age of Reason* might himself have luxuriated in,—of “*affecting* to be a naturalist;” and that too, without going into details as to *how*, and in what *manner*, the designs of God upon such a subject should be carried into effect; though in fact, had Paul used the simile of the seed with the object stated, his reasoning would not have merited the coarse dogmatism which, at the hands of Mr. Paine, it has received: Dr. Priestley, indeed, had long before the appearance of Mr. Paine’s critique remarked, that “the comparison is not to be supposed to apply throughout, as if the Apostle intended to say, that by a law of nature, similar to that of the re-production of seeds from seeds, a dead man should produce a living one, for the cases are remarkably different, there being an apparent living principle or germ, the expansion of which makes the future plant; so that if the whole seed should ever become putrid, no other plant or seed could

* *Age of Reason*, Part II. p. 85.

be produced from it; but as antecedent to experience, we could not have known this, but should rather have imagined that a seed buried in the ground would be absolutely lost; so, notwithstanding appearances to the contrary, with respect to man, though he be buried, the time may come when he will appear*.”

But had Paul's knowledge of natural history equalled that of even the author of the *Age of Reason*, and had he attempted to prove "his system of resurrection," by "the progress of an animal from one state of being to another, as from a worm to a butterfly," then indeed his knowledge and his reasoning might well have been impeached; for in the instance of seed sown in the earth, there *is*, to ordinary observation, if not a real, an apparent extinction of life, and the production from the grain thus sown in the earth presents a different aspect to that of the seed from which it has sprung; hence Paul's case in replying to the disingenuous quibble "with what *bodies* do they come," is ably and philosophically sustained, God giving to the new production that "*body which hath pleased him*," and to every seed, in common with all the works of the Almighty mind, "*its own* (its suitable) body." In Mr. Paine's *amended* case, however, can it be held that there is either a real or an apparent extinction; the worm, in becoming a butterfly, merely undergoing a change of form? But had the Apostle indeed argued the doctrine of a future life, (as Mr. Paine intimates he ought to have done,) and had he been so imbecile in his reasoning as to apply to his case the illustration of the butterfly, which if it proved anything would tend to establish the negative of his position, then in truth he might have merited the imputation of folly: and further, had he gone beyond this, and thus addressing the

* Priestley's *Notes on the Bible*, vol. iv. p. 160.

sceptical Corinthians, have stated, How say some among you that there will be no resurrection of the dead? "I trouble not myself about the mode of future existence: I content myself with believing it even to *positive* conviction:—It appears more probable to me that I shall continue to exist hereafter, than that I should have had existence*."

Without stopping to inquire what Mr. Paine might have said of Paul, had the Apostle thus met the objections to the resurrection, it would not be difficult to conceive what ought to have been the estimate of such a mode of satisfying doubting minds with argument or with authority; neither would the case be improved, if upon a renewed application to their great leader the Corinthians were thus replied to: I am not well able to offer you arguments and evidence that you shall live again, because the fact is contrary to the evidence of our senses, and one which the Divine commands alone can satisfactorily establish amongst mankind,—although the man Jesus was raised from the dead, amidst other purposes, for that of attesting the resurrection of all mankind, and although I, with a host of others, have been an eye-witness of his resurrection, yet all this availeth nothing, because "a very numerous part of the animal creation preach to you far better than I (Paul) the belief of a life hereafter; *their* little life resembles an earth and a heaven, a present and a future state, and comprises *immortality in miniature* †."

But to return to the argument: The simile used by Paul, it has been seen, was not to *prove* the resurrection, but simply to meet the question, as to our *form* in a future state; and in support of the position, that "*God giveth*

* See Mr. Paine's Confession of Faith, *Age of Reason*, Part I. p. 52.

† Paine's *Age of Reason*, Part II. p. 84.

a body as it hath pleased him,” as instanced in every exercise of the Almighty power; that power, the magnitude and infinity of which was equally developed in the minute as in the vast in creation; and that in all there was an evidence of the fitness of every form to the circumstances, and for the purposes for which it was created, as demonstrated in the production of the fruits of the earth—in the formation of beasts—of birds—of fishes—of men—of bodies terrestrial and celestial—in the glory of the sun—of the moon—of the stars,—and, “as one star differeth from another star in glory, so also is the resurrection of the dead: it is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption; it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power; it is sown an animal body, it is raised a spiritual body; for there is an animal* body, and there is a spiritual body.” (vv. 41—43.) “Paul,” says Locke, “means to show, “that as we now have animal bodies, which, unless supported by a constant supply of food and air, will fail and perish, and at last, do what we can, will dissolve, and come to an end, so that at the resurrection we shall have

* The received text reads, “*it is sown a NATURAL body,*” which tends to mislead the reader. The adoption of the above rendering is supported by numerous authorities. See Macknight, Belsham, and Locke; the latter of whom states, that the term “translated in the Bible *a natural body,* should be translated *an animal body.*” And, in conformity with this view of the present and preceding passages, the late Mr. Alexander has thus ably paraphrased these verses:—“Shall we imagine that the Being who annually renews the face of Nature, and gives fresh life to the world of plants and vegetables, is either unwilling to exert himself in behalf of reasonable beings, or can find no resources in his power and wisdom, for restoring *men* to life, and furnishing them with such bodies as are adapted to a more perfect and durable state of existence? This will appear still more incredible if we consider the immense variety which reigns throughout the works of Nature, and in what manner the Creator of all things has furnished the almost endless tribes of animals which inhabit this globe with a form and temperament peculiar to themselves, and at the same time

bodies which shall have an essential, natural, and inseparable life in them;” that life which is promised by Jesus to those “which shall be accounted worthy to obtain that world, and the resurrection from the dead; for neither can they die any more; for they are equal to the angels (messengers), and are the children of God, being the children of the resurrection*.”

Thus the argument pursued by Paul to convince those in the Corinthian church who were sceptical as to a future state, is of great importance; seeing, that whilst he does not even glance at the theories of the Immaterialists, yet, had his argument been expressly shaped for the purpose of overthrowing their doctrines, it could not have been more successful; and while the *certainty* of futurity is maintained, some of the particulars characteristic thereof are also treated upon, by which means the Apostle thus presents a connected view of the entire subject; for “now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the first fruits of them that slept;” the first fruits in the Mosaic law †, being the first ripe corn gathered before the rest,

exquisitely accommodated to their condition and ways of living. Man is sown and buried in the ground, but is raised incorruptible, without the least tendency to a decay; (he) is consigned to the ground in a state of dishonour, when the breath being departed, the dust returns to dust, and mingles with its native earth; but that which is raised appears with peculiar marks of honour and dignity; it (he) is sown in weakness, the fine machine being totally disordered, its action ceased, and the organs of sense no longer able to perform any part of their wonted service; but it (he) is raised with accessions of power and strength, and with an improved capacity of performing all the actions of a nobler life. An animal body is sown in the ground, and endued with the breath of life, but a life imperfect and momentary, subject to disease, sorrow, and travail; but a spiritual body is raised, of a more refined and perfect constitution, and which is superior to all the pains and evils of mortality.”—*Paraphrase upon 15th Corinthians*. By John Alexander, 1766, p. 58.

* Luke xx. 35, 36.

† Lev. xxiii. 10.

such being the earnest and pledge of the future harvest; a figure, as applied to a future state of existence, illustrative of the situation occupied by Jesus relatively towards others. "But every man in his own order: Christ the first fruits; afterwards they that are Christ's at his coming. Then will the end be, when God the Father delivereth up the kingdom to him; when he shall have put down all rule, all authority and power; for he must reign until he hath put all enemies under his feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death. And when all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him*, that God may be all in all." See verses 23 to 28.

The order of the resurrection, as stated by Paul, has given rise to much diversity of opinion; some maintaining that it is a relation of the several classes of mankind, which are all to rise at the general resurrection; others that it is a statement of—firstly, the resurrection of

* In the adoption of the above translation, there is a wide departure from the received text: the reasons for so doing are, that, whilst the common translation has given rise to the most opposing theories, it fails to convey to the mind any clear and connected view of the Apostle's argument: this will be more clearly seen by comparing the 24th and 28th verses. In the former, "HE" that is to *put down all rule, authority, and power*" is Jesus. In the latter, "HE" that is to "*put all things under him*" is God. In the 24th verse, when the "end" cometh, Jesus is to deliver up the kingdom to God. Now "*the kingdom*" may be deemed to be the kingdom or church of God—not the kingdom or church of Jesus; consequently Jesus could not "*deliver*" that up which was not his to deliver. To make the 25th verse accord with the common translation of the 24th, a new feature is appropriated to the Messiah's office; that of making him reign "*until HE hath put all enemies under HIS feet,*" when the declaration of the Supreme Being is, "Sit thou on my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool." See Psalm cx; Matthew xxii. 43; Acts ii. 34. Throughout the Scriptures, the *punishment* of the enemies of truth proceeds *directly* from the Deity alone, whose benevolence is in an equal degree shown, whether in punishing or in rewarding and exalting; and in re-

Jesus; secondly, the resurrection of the virtuous; thirdly, that of the wicked, who, after having passed through a necessary state of discipline, shall be made virtuous and happy: and others esteem the verses, from the 23rd to the 29th inclusive, to be descriptive of three distinct and distant periods; firstly, the resurrection of Jesus; secondly, that of his devoted servants in every age, who, because of their obedience to the principles of the Gospel, would be raised prior to the general resurrection, and be associated with the Messiah when he shall, at Jerusalem, occupy the throne of David, and his twelve Apostles shall judge the twelve tribes of Israel; fulfilling the declaration in the Revelations, as being of those that are "Blessed and holy and that hath part in the first resurrection, for on such the *second death* hath no power, but they shall be priests of God, and of Christ*;" a period of time considered to be referred to by Paul in the Thesalonians, when the "Lord himself shall descend, and the dead in Christ shall *rise first* †," as a reward to such

lation to whom, when he hath put all enemies under his feet, he will then, when that is effected, deliver "*the kingdom*" to the government of his son on earth, subsequently to and arising out of the restoration of the Jews to their own land, and the *personal* (not spiritual) reign of the Messiah at his second coming at Jerusalem, when "God shall be all in all," by means of the universal spread of the principles of the Gospel. The authority in support of the adopted translation is that of Gilbert Wakefield, who, instead of "*Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father,*" renders the passage "*Then will the end be when God the Father delivereth up the kingdom to him*" (Jesus); and this translation is founded upon the Ethiopic version, which appears to clear up the difficulties of most commentators; difficulties which, by the way, Mr. Belsham ‡ has said that "nothing perhaps but the great event can fully explain."

* Rev. xx. 6.

† 1 Thess. iv. 16.

‡ Belsham's *Epistles of Paul*, vol. ii. p. 338.

persons on the one hand, and on the other for the purpose of placing them in situations to assist in the establishment of that promised state of things, in which God shall be "all in all;" a state in which the knowledge of the Lord should cover the earth as the waters do the channels of the deep,—thus fulfilling the promise to Abraham, that in him and in his seed should all nations of the earth be blessed. These several modes of explaining a passage in the writings of the Apostle of acknowledged difficulty, are submitted with the remark, that be the correct one which it may, the argument against the Immaterialists will receive full and equal support, seeing that in each it is the "resurrection of *the man* from the dead," not the possession of an immortal spirit, which is made the *sole* ground of hope for a future state of existence; and in perfect conformity with this view, are the statements of the Apostle, in which it is palpable, that an immaterial, immortal principle is not only not recognised by him, but that the admission of its existence would entirely destroy his argument. "Behold, I show you a mystery; we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed; *for the dead* (not the immortal souls) *shall be raised* incorruptible, and we shall be changed; for this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality," then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, "death is swallowed up in victory." Need it be here pointed out that that which is immaterial cannot be corruptible, that that which is immortal can neither be called upon "*to put on*" immortality, nor can it become mortal; that the future existence of a being inherently immortal, could neither be "a mystery," nor "a victory," neither could it excite unexpected exultation; and the grand climax of the Apostle, "O death! where is thy sting? O grave! where is thy

victory?" would have been a satire upon the understanding of those to whom he wrote, and could not have failed to have furnished his enemies with a triumphant weapon against himself: for in the language of Archdeacon Blackburn, "of what consequence is it, if they have immortal life by nature, whether they have it by promise or not? what does it signify, whether they have hopes of a resurrection or not, if they are sure of a future life by provision, and allotment *without* a resurrection *?"

An assertion has been made by writers, whose sentiments in other particulars are much opposed to each other; namely, that a future state of existence is not a doctrine *peculiar* to the Gospel of Jesus. In support of this position, Mr. Sturch, in a chapter on this subject, asserts, that "as a future state was *certainly known* to both the Jewish and Heathen world, what then becomes of what has been termed the *peculiar doctrine* of the Gospel †?" To which inquiry it may be replied, that the future state of the Heathen world was one, the views of which varied not only in almost every heathen nation, but also in the tenets of almost every eminent individual in each nation; and that the whole was built upon the presumed existence of an immaterial, immortal principle in man; but the Scriptural doctrine of a future life, *by means of a resurrection from the dead*, and aided by the fact of the resurrection of the man Jesus, is a doctrine "*peculiarly*" of the Gospel—a doctrine which the wise and the great among the heathens did not even comprehend; conceiving "Jesus and the resurrection" to be strange gods; "and when they (the Athenian Philosophers) heard of the resurrection of the dead, some mocked, and others said, We will

* Blackburn's *Works*, vol. iii. p. 195.

† Apeleutherus, p. 214.

hear you again of this matter*.” A still more recent writer than the one just quoted, represents as one and the same system, the doctrine of an immortal soul, and that of the resurrection from the dead; for “the immortality of the soul, and a future state of rewards and punishments were fully recognised in ALL the religions of the ancient world, *except* the Jewish, and they are equally so in those of more modern times †:” whilst an opposite theory to that of Mr. Lawrence, in regard to the Jews, has been maintained by some Jewish as well as Christian writers: among the former, Ben Levi thinks “it necessary to take notice of the falsity of what Christians in general maintain; viz. that the Jews were unacquainted with the doctrine of the Resurrection ‡.” This writer, however, commits that doctrine in *two* ways: *first*, by falling in with the heathen hypothesis of an immortal soul; and *secondly*, by contending that the resurrection will be that of *the same* body.

It would, however, seem to be the fact, that in the latter period of the Jewish history, some sects among that people had imbibed, doubtless from their intercourse with the heathen nations, the notion of an immortal principle in man; but it may be most safely asserted, that, *as a nation*, they had not that which, upon such a subject, can be the *only* ground for believing that we shall live again,—namely, the authority of Revelation. The rewards promised to the Jews by command of the Deity, and the punishments threatened, were of a temporal character, nor did the knowledge of a future life form any part of the Mosaic œconomy; still, considering that Judaism and the Gospel of Jesus are really but parts of one system, it is highly probable that the Prophets and other eminently enlightened and virtuous men

* Acts xxxii.

† Lawrence’s *Lectures*, p. 8.

‡ Levi’s *Dissertation on the Prophecies*, p. 171.

of the Jewish nation were led to infer, from what they did know of the dispensations of God, that the present would not be the *only* state of our existence; and such an idea was calculated to receive support from the facts of Enoch and Elijah not having seen death, as well as from many exalted passages in the prophetic writings descriptive of the character and attributes of the Divine Being. Still this must have been but conjecture on their parts, and can, in relation to their sentiments, be but conjecture on ours; but this we do know, that “Jesus the anointed *hath brought life and immortality to light, through the Gospel**.” Such life and such immortality is truly a doctrine *peculiar* to the Gospel—a doctrine which, without an express revelation, man never could have had adequate causes in which to place confident hopes; and it may safely be asserted, that the doctrine of the resurrection was not communicated to mankind *before* the proclamation of that Gospel, of which it forms a leading and a vital part, and as such is one of “the great truths of religion, and one of the fundamental principles of morals,” and exactly possesses the recommendation which a writer before quoted deems essential to the reception of such a truth; “for *Revelation alone* is capable of dissipating the uncertainties which perplex those who inquire into the sources of these important principles †.” Revelation *has* dissipated these uncertainties, though it would seem to but little purpose in the instance of one (Mr. Lawrence) who can be so utterly ignorant of what it has taught, as to confound the Scriptural doctrine of the resurrection of the dead with the “sublime doctrine of all ages” (i. e. the immortality of the soul), and then jeer at Revelation—not for what it does teach, but what, from his own ignorance of the subject,

* 2 Tim. i. 10.

† Lawrence’s *Lectures*, p. 12.

he deems fit to attribute thereto. It is a doctrine which secures the object of future existence, without being encumbered with the palpable absurdities and philosophical puzzles of immaterialism;—it comports with the most enlightened reason, and the deepest philosophical and physiological research; and connected as it is with the nature, and fitted to secure the object, of revealed religion, it is, when justly appreciated, capable of supplying the most powerful motives, for perfecting the character, and for calling forth the energies and insuring the happiness of man, both in the present and in a future state of existence.

With this estimate of the Scriptural doctrine of a future state, the hypothesis of an immaterial and immortal soul cannot but be reprobated; the belief of which, being opposed to Divine authority, and tending to the destruction of a most valuable part of Revelation, has supplied the unbeliever with some of his most potent arguments against that system; but to such supporters of revelation, as may from old prejudices still adhere to the heathen hypothesis, the well-expressed advice of Bishop Law may be strongly recommended: “If you have hurt your own cause, and corrupted Christianity by an impure mixture of human wisdom, falsely so called, or by the dregs of heathen philosophy; if you have disguised the face of it, or rather substituted something else in its room, and thereby put arms into the hands of infidels, which they have used but too successfully against us;—I ask whether it is not high time to examine our Bibles, and try to exhibit the true Christian plan as it is there delivered, and consider whether we may not surely rest upon that solid rock of a resurrection, without any of those visionary prospects which imagination is ever ready to furnish us

with : whether by this means we might not be able to move the seat of war into the enemy's quarters, till at length he sees *the necessity for some superior guide, and sets himself in good earnest to seek after that light which came down from above, and which alone can lead him to the light of everlasting life*?*''

* Postscript to *Theory of Religion*, p. 427, &c.

FASTS, FESTIVALS, SABBATHS.

CHAPTER I.

HEATHEN AND JEWISH FESTIVALS.

“I pour out a flood of tears to think what human ceremonies have cost all mankind, and particularly what a price my native country has paid for them.”—*Robert Robinson, of Cambridge.*

“In the Christian Church no festival appears clearly to have been instituted, either by Jesus Christ or his Apostles.”—*John Robinson, of Westmoreland.*

THE question as to the expediency of religious ceremonial observances, in relation to their effects upon society, has been debated with no ordinary zeal and ability, and as yet remains an entirely open subject, alike interesting to the theologian and the philosopher. The present remarks chiefly relate, not to their expediency, but to their history and *authority*, with the design of ascertaining whether any—and if any, which—are supported by Divine authority; making an obedience thereto binding in perpetuity upon all believers in that religion which, with incomparable eloquence, was portrayed on Mars Hill as having, in contradiction to heathenism, for the *exclusive* object of its worship a God “that made the world and all things therein,” and who, as “Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands, neither is worshipped with men’s hands as though he needed any thing, seeing he giveth to all life, and breath, and all things*.” These doctrines of the distinguished Apostle thus formed a singular contrast to the

* Acts xvii.

religion of the philosophers, and admirably sustained the simplicity and the purity of that reverence, which had been declared of old to be of a mental and a spiritual character. “When ye come to appear before me, bring no more vain oblations; incense is an abomination unto me; the new moons and sabbaths, and your appointed feasts, my soul hateth*.” Still we are called upon by the Christianity which is “part and parcel of the law of the land,” to conform to institutions which in spirit but ill accord with the lamentations of the Prophet, or the subsequent authority of the Apostle. “How turn ye again to the weak and beggarly elements, whereunto ye desire again to be in bondage? *Ye observe days, and months, and times, and years.* I am afraid of you, lest I have bestowed upon you labour in vain †.”

Our ecclesiastical hierarchy, however, in its wisdom, and in “holy convocation,” together with the king’s majesty, “under God” as the *supreme head* of the church, spiritually and temporally, has resolved that we shall observe “times and seasons,” and has made its allotments of fasts and of festivals.

FASTS are days of religious abstinence, and have, either really or nominally, been observed in most ages and nations. The first recorded instance is in the time of Moses, who enjoined a solemn day of expiation: this fast was instituted by Divine authority. The Jews had also other times of fasting, and of humiliation, such as “the fasts of the congregation;” all of which they observed with great strictness. Between fasting and abstinence the church of Rome drew a distinction, but the church of England has copied the fasts without this distinction; indeed there is a statute which declares, that whoever, in preaching or writing, affirms it to be necessary on fast-

* Isaiah i.

† Galatians iv.

days to abstain from flesh, for the purpose of *saving the soul of man*, is to be punished as a spreader of false news. Yet one of the homilies in the church Prayer Book, which homily was originally passed at the council of Chalcedon, declares—that withholding meat, drink, and all natural food from the body, during fasts, is “proper for Christian duty.” How this injunction of the 630 *holy fathers*, of which the council was composed, was and *is* observed, might not unprofitably be adverted to.

FEASTS, among the heathen nations, were very numerous, and instituted on various occasions; some of which were in honour of the gods, when they had conferred any signal favour; and others in memory of particular individuals: from these observances some of the feasts in the “*reformed Christian calendar*” are borrowed, even to very trifling points of detail, and they are treated by church writers as “*holy days* ;” thus, in illustration, Christmas-day, Easter-day, and all Sundays are festivals, a festival being a church solemnity or rejoicing, in honour of God or of a saint!

In Nelson’s *Companion to the Fasts and Festivals of the Church of England*, we learn that “festivals, or holy days, are set apart *by the church*” (not by Divine authority) either for the remembrance of some special mercies of God, such as the Birth and Resurrection of Christ, the Descent of the Holy Ghost, &c.; or in memory of the *great heroes* of the Christian religion, the blessed Apostles, and other saints. That they are of ECCLESIASTICAL INSTITUTION, agreeable to Scripture, in the general design of them, for the promoting of piety, and consonant to the practice of the primitive church.” The primitive, it is presumed, can in this case only mean the papal church. By the 5th and 6th Edward VI., cap. 3, it appears, that the compilers of our Liturgy conceived that all festi-

vals were “to call men to remembrance of their duty ; and it hath been” (they say) “wholesomely provided that there should be some certain times and days appointed, wherein Christians should cease from all kinds of labour, and should apply themselves only and wholly to the aforesaid holy works, properly pertaining unto true religion : the which times appointed for the same are called holy days, for godly and holy works wherewith only God is to be honoured.” The days thus to be kept were Sundays, Christmas Day, Good Friday, Easter Sunday, the Purification, the Epiphany, the Holy Innocents, the Nativities of all the Apostles and “great church heroes,” &c. These days, and “none others,” were directed to be kept holy.

This statute was afterwards repealed by Mary—continued void throughout the long reign of Elizabeth, but was revived by James. Yet *holy* as these days (and “*none others*”) were enjoined to be kept, being exclusively for “*godly and holy works, wherewith God only was to be honoured,*” we find that the appointed leaders to the paths of righteousness, the shepherds of the *holy* flocks, even in those times, were, upon Sundays and other holy days, characterized by “posting over their services as fast as they could gallope ; for eyther they had two places to serve, or else there were some games to be playde in the afternoon ; as lying for the whetstone, heathenish dancing for the ring, a beare or a bull to be baited, or else a jackanapes to ride on horseback, or an interlude to be playde in the church*.”

The *authority* for the institution of these fasts and festivals, or *holy* days, is stated to be derived, not from that which can alone be of any real authority to the believer, namely their Divine appointment, but from the

* See Introduction to Strutt's *Sports and Pastimes of the People of England*.

twentieth of the thirty-nine articles, which were agreed upon by the archbishops and bishops, in 1562, "for the avoiding of diversity of opinion, and for the establishment of consent touching *true* religion." Passing by, in relation to these articles, the additions as well as curtailments which they underwent, and the heated controversies and recriminations, and mutual charges of forgery, which their arrangement engendered, it may be well merely to note the act of 1571; in which the thirty-nine articles are referred to as the articles of religion, in "an imprinted book"—"for *avoiding* diversities of opinion." A dispute has arisen upon these articles, as to *where* the "imprinted book" thus described, and upon which the act of parliament assumes to be framed, is. The fact being, that the book so quoted is held not to be in existence; whilst in the manuscripts of the thirty-nine articles which have reached us, both in English and Latin, there are numberless various readings, some of which materially affect the sense of the text; and one of the most important of these various readings is to be found in the twentieth article, the article which declares the power of the church to "decree rites or ceremonies," and gives it authority in controversies of faith. It is an unquestionable fact, says Mr. Robinson of Cambridge, "that the ceremonies and holy days of all the good people of the church of England were, among 117 priests, carried by a majority of one vote, and that given by proxy. Whether the absent member, who gave the casting vote, were talking, or journeying, or hunting, or sleeping, is immaterial; he was the god almighty of this article of English religion, and his power decreed rites and ceremonies." But, absurd as the passing of the decree by the casting vote of an absent person may be, yet it must be esteemed to have been passed, and, so far, may be binding upon those who can sanction such authority; and the fact appears to be,

that a part of the debated article was not inserted at all in that copy of the articles which, in 1671, received the sanction of the legislature. Bishop Laud, on his trial, was accused of having fabricated it; which, however, he denied; still it did not form a part of the Articles as established by the 13th of Elizabeth, or as agreed to by the convocation of 1562 or 1571 *. And yet, with all this uncertainty as to the legitimacy of the article, and the entire absence of authority from the New Testament for *any* rite or ceremony whatever, the church of England proceeded to issue its decrees in support of the ceremonies of its heathen and catholic predecessors; and even retained the lessons, as directed by the Catholic church, to be read on "*holy days*" for "godly discipline." The Catholic arrangement too has been preserved, of making very numerous selections, not exclusively from the Old or New Testament, but from "Wisdom," "Moses," and other apocryphal books. Yet so essential is a conformity to these ceremonies, *thus derived*, esteemed to be by the highest church authorities, that we are advertised in the Book of Common Prayer, that "the transgression of a common order and discipline is no small offence before God;" they being for "godly discipline, and such as be apt to stir up the dull mind of man to the remembrance of his duty to God, by some notable and special signification." We are also referred to the Jewish law, though it was declared by the highest authority that these institutions should only continue until they had fulfilled their destined object; that the law, indeed, came by Moses, but that grace and *freedom* came by Jesus Christ, the breaker down of the ceremonial wall, the proclaimer of the "*perfect law of liberty*;" and that

* See a pamphlet printed in 1710, called "*Priestcraft in Perfection; or, a Detection of inserting and continuing this Clause in the Twentieth Article of the Articles of the Church of England.*"

the chosen of God were no longer under bondage being relieved from that yoke of ceremonial observances, which the Jews in the time of Jesus, in common with their fathers, had been hardly able to bear.

Let us glance at the Jewish ceremonies, their authority and objects; bearing in our recollection what are called the Christian ceremonies, with their authority and their objects. In the first place there was no Jewish fast, or feast, ever appointed in commemoration of the birth or death of any individual: eminent as particular men had been, as well in teaching as in delivering their nation from bondage, they had no days appointed for their remembrance; nor did they, with all their tendency towards superstitious observances, honour with the title of *saints*—Abraham, Isaac, or Jacob: to act on the principles, and to imitate the example of these great though uncanonized patriarchs being esteemed, in those days, at least as effective “in godly discipline” as the strictest observance of all the days in the calendar can be regarded in the present. Besides which, the Jewish institutions were of a practically moral character—called for, even, by their former superstitions, by the want of knowledge incident to the age in which they lived, and the circumstances in which they were so peculiarly placed; and designed apparently, by means adapted to the then comparative infancy of civilization, to divert the minds of the people from heathen impurities and superstitious observances, by connecting the gratification of their senses with the inculcation of moral truths, of a constant remembrance of their past situation, of the God who had delivered them from slavery, and who continued to afford them favour and protection; and to keep in remembrance the unity of God, and the benevolence of his government, as demonstrated in all the Divine conduct towards their nation. Thus the Passover was connected

with their past sojourn in Egypt, and their miraculous deliverance therefrom. The Feast of Pentecost, was instituted to oblige the Israelites to repair to the temple of the Lord, and acknowledge his dominion over them; and also to render thanks to God, for his having given the law to Moses on Mount Sinai. The Feast of Tabernacles, at which the whole of the nation attended in the temple, and dwelt under tents of leaves, was to remind them that their fathers had dwelt forty years in tents, as wanderers in the wilderness.

With these, in common with other minor ceremonies, the miraculous events in the Jewish history were completely interwoven; and being so, the importance of a strict and perfect observance of them became essential; and a reference to the books of Exodus, Leviticus, and Numbers, will prove their admirable fitness to the existing condition of the particular nation upon whom these observances were enjoined, and the essentially moral and enlightened objects with which they were combined. But, although the Israelites did not appoint days in commemoration of their really eminent men—their “heroes,” the Christians, in after times were careful to supply such deficiency: one of the reasons given for the establishment of Advent, or the forty days’ fast prior to what is styled the “coming of Christ,” being—that “it was instituted in honour of the fast of Moses, as that of Lent was in honour of the fast of Christ; and that as Moses, by a fast of forty days upon the mount, was prepared to receive the two tables of the law from God, so it is incumbent upon Christians to prepare themselves, by a like abstinence, for the reception of the eternal Word, the true and great lawgiver coming in the flesh*.”

The church which “decrees rites and ceremonies” in-

* See Shepherd’s *Elucidation of the Rites and Ceremonies of the Churches of England and Ireland*, 1801.

stituted a forty days' fast, in honour of an event, of which the individuals immediately concerned took no such especial cognizance;—but even if there had been such a fast among the Jews, unless it had been commanded to be continued by Jesus, those who observe it would, to the extent of this ceremony, constitute themselves Jews, not Christians; and then, indeed, they must really “*fast*,” not as by the present mode, in which even the most rigid of the saints are permitted the “*free use of oil, of wine, and of all sorts of fish.*” The season for observing this last fast, which we are told is “*incumbent upon Christians,*” was, like Christmas, among the *holy fathers*, subject to considerable variations; and some hot disputes arose in consequence, as the Missals of Ambrose and Gregory materially differed in relation to it. The Church, therefore, being resolved to decide the controversy, appealed to a miracle. The two Missals were laid upon the altar of the cathedral of Milan, the church doors shut and sealed; in the morning Gregory's Missal was found torn in pieces, and Ambrose's placed upon the altar in a position of being read: this might have appeared final against poor Gregory,—but a power behind the altar, greater than the altar itself, sagely decided that Gregory's Missal being torn and scattered about, it should be used all over the world, and Ambrose's only in the church of Milan!

In looking at the two codes of ceremonies in question, and without running a parallel between them—without even glancing at the divinely appointed and really moral character of the Jewish, and at the Pagan original and immoral character of parts of the English church calendar—without observing that the one had time, place, season, and object distinctly set forth; and that the other, which may be (according to the Book of Common Prayer) “*varied according to the various exigencies of times and occasions*”

—without referring to the authority of the one, which had God for its institutor—and of the other, which rests on a claim of the “church,” by act of parliament, to “decree rites and ceremonies,”—it may be submitted that, separate and apart from any of these considerations, the church calendar does not possess an adequate claim upon our attention; seeing that any ceremony, be it a fast or a festival, cannot now be binding upon believers, unless *distinctly and positively appointed*—not by Moses—but by Jesus. And, upon looking to this latter source, to him who alone can be the Gospel lawgiver, it will be seen, that his mission was to destroy those “shadows of things that were to come;” that the whole spirit and genius of his religion were opposed to ceremonial observances; and also that the great follower in his footsteps, the apostle Paul, expresses alarm for those who had evinced a taste for their former “bondage,” from which they had been delivered by having “known God, or rather are known of God: how then” (says Paul) “turn ye again to the weak and beggarly elements of this world?”

The moral value of religious festivals may be best estimated by a reference to the ancient, as well as modern, authorized practices and observances appointed for such occasions. Though, if these facts did not exist, it would still be difficult to discover how, in the language of the Book of Common Prayer, the “dull mind of man could be stirred up to a remembrance of his duty to God,” by an observance, for example, of the Ember days, the three Rogation days, the days of the Holy Innocents, the Nativity—with the accompanying vigils—of Jesus and his Apostles, the Purification of the Virgin, or the forty days of Lent: except indeed, in regard to the latter, virtue can be extracted from an act of parliament passed in 1549, in which we are apprised, “That though all days

and meats are in themselves alike, yet fasting being a great help to virtue, and to the subduing of the body to the mind : therefore all persons, excepting the weak, *or those that have the king's license*, shall, under several penalties, fast ; yet a distinction of meats being conducive to *the advancement of the fishing trade*, be it enacted that Lent, and all Saturdays, and Fridays, and Ember days, shall be fish days." Neither can much of religious truth be discovered, which should cause "the dull mind of man" to venerate the Deity, in the instructions given in connexion with the festival of the "holy virgin," in which she is styled "the empress of heaven," "the queen of heaven," "the lady of the universe," "the *only hope of sinners*," and where she is called upon "to *command God* her son to forgive those which *he had forgotten*," but now remembered,—not for their, but for her sake. Although the church of England may not fairly be chargeable, in its festival dedicated to the Virgin, with blasphemy to the full extent of that above stated, yet the difference is one of degree, not of kind ; for, in regard to its festivals, in common with every other part of its establishment, the approach to its great prototype is so close, and the union in principle so perfect, that it is most justly complimented by Butler, the modern and liberal Roman Catholic writer, in his article on the Church of France, in the following unqualified manner : "Of all Protestant churches the national church of England *most nearly resembles the church of Rome*. It has retained much of her dogma, and much of her discipline. Down to the sub-deacon it has retained the whole of her hierarchy ; and, like her, has deans, chapters, prebends, archdeacons, rectors, and vicars ; *a liturgy taken in a great measure from the Catholic*, and composed like it of psalms, canticles, the three creeds, litanies, epistles, gospels, prayers, and responses. Both churches

have the sacraments of baptism and the eucharist; the absolution of the sick, the burial service, the sign of the cross in baptism, the reservation of confirmation and order to bishops, the different episcopal and sacerdotal dress, the organ, a cathedral service, *feasts and fasts*. Without adopting all the general councils of the church of Rome, the church of England has adopted the first three of them; and without acknowledging the authority of the other councils, or the authority of the fathers, the English divines of the established church allow, that the early councils and early fathers are entitled to a high degree of respect*.”

Such approbation from a Catholic writer must be rather humiliating to that class of churchmen who shudder at the very name of popery. It is, however, well merited; and both churches have proved themselves not indolent imitators of their heathen instructors; the contents of the *calendar* supplying as it does ample evidence of its partially heathen original. The *calendar*, or *kalendar*, from *calendarium*, was invented by Numa, for making known to his subjects all matters relative to their feasts or ceremonies. The “*Christian Calendar*” of the Church of England consists of the following days; which Nelson, in his *Companion to the Fasts and Festivals of the Church of England*, asserts are designed to “improve the HOLY SEASONS to the *advantage of our souls*.” They are divided into two classes. First, Of those which are moveable, and therefore dependent upon Easter, there are eight. Secondly, Of immoveable feasts there are eighty-one. Besides these, there are of vigils, fasts, and days of abstinence seventy-one; together with all the Fridays in the year, and “four certain solemn days for *particular* services;” two of which are appropriated to that pious explosion, the gunpowder plot, and to the memory of our *saint* Charles I., whose

* *The Philological and Biographical Works of Charles Butler*, vol. 5.

death is somewhat oddly termed a “martyrdom;”—making altogether 216 days; being more than half the year set apart by the law of the land, and by the solemn injunctions of the Book of Common Prayer, for religious observance, —to disregard which we are apprised “is no small offence before God.”

As it might be tedious, and perhaps unprofitable, to trace up in detail this mass of ceremonial observances, it may be well to confine ourselves to a few of the more prominent days and seasons.

The “Feast of the Nativity,” or Christmas Day, is now held in Europe on the 25th December, in honour of the birth of Jesus; upon which day we are instructed, by the highest church authorities, to have in our minds “great admiration of God,”—“great thankfulness to the blessed Jesus for *consenting* to be born on this day:” yet we do not find that “Christ’s nativity” was a matter ever referred to by Jesus himself*; we may safely infer, indeed, that it was an event never celebrated during his life, or after his resurrection, by his personal friends, by his apostles, or by the first believers:—the second century is deemed to have given birth to this “*great festival*,” a period in church history in which little of the Gospel remained, it having been corrupted by and amalgamated with heathenism. The *day* of the birth of the Messiah,

* The two first chapters of Matthew, and of Luke, in which such obscene and contradictory statements are made concerning the birth of Jesus, are held to be spurious: see Pope on the *Miraculous Conception*; Lardner’s *Works*, vol. 1; Dr. Williams’ *Free Inquiry*; Priestley’s *Early Opinions*; Evanson’s *Dissonance*; the *Improved Version of the New Testament*; and the *Freethinking Christians’ Magazine* for 1814. All, indeed, that we know of the commencement of the public life of Jesus, and of his age, is that the holy spirit descended upon him—that a voice from heaven proclaimed him to be the well-beloved son of God; and that at this time “Jesus himself began to be about thirty years of age, being the son of Joseph.” Luke iii. 23.

too, has been a matter of much laborious investigation, and not altogether without cause; for chronological accuracy with a church which "decrees rites and ceremonies," is supposed to aid and confirm its institutions; hence the anxiety to give to the 25th day of December the honour of the "Nativity." Nelson labours to remove the difficulties which encumber this point, by asserting that "Jesus' birthday was a great festival in the *primitive*" (i. e. of course the Roman Catholic) church: though we have no certain evidence of the exact time which was observed, the 25th December, there is little doubt, is *the very day*; though if the day were mistaken, it will be pardonable in those *who think* they are not mistaken*." That mistakes or inconsistencies either do, or have existed, even in England, is unquestionable; the alteration of the style alone might produce such. The Eastern and Western churches have never agreed upon "*the very day*," the former keeping it on the 5th January, the latter on the 25th December; though not always consistent even to that date, there being variations in the Western churches from the 20th to the 25th December. There were other churches who celebrated this "*very day*" in April—others in May; and the Greek church now observe Christmas in February. There is a learned and laboured work, written by a clergyman of that diocese (Peterborough) which, in our own times, has been blessed with an orthodox and an immaculate bishop, the title of which is expressive of its character, and of the importance too which is attached to precision relative to the birth of Jesus; it is, "A Brief but True Account of the *certain* Year, Month and Day of the Birth of Jesus Christ." And this inquiry results in proving the day to be the 25th December: but, in despite

* Nelson's *Companion to the Fasts and Festivals of the Church of England*, p. 53.

of all this learning, and this “true account” of the “certain day,” it is admitted by Sir Isaac Newton, by Shepherd, and yet more strongly by Brady, in his *Clavis Calendaria* that “there are not any certain traditions about the years of Christ.” (See Newton on Daniel.) “The day of our Lord’s Nativity, it is now settled beyond all dispute, by arguments incontrovertible, did *not* take place on the 25th December.” (Brady, vol. ii. p. 330.)

These observances have been alternately instituted and abrogated by human authority, and in compliance with human interest or human caprice. The laws of morality remain unchanged in all ages; the commands of God, for any institution, may, at any time, be referred to as a standard; but how can we be safe, if at one time men in authority can order the observance of days, and at another, time their non-observance; if we are *here* directed to observe one period, and *there* compelled to regard another, as sacred to the same object? Yet such are the inconsistencies which the history of feasts and fasts frequently presents us with. In the earlier ages many doubtless did not observe these times and seasons; yet Christmas is described, by Chrysostom, as a festival “renowned far and wide, from Thrace even to Cadiz, as of all festivals the most venerable—the mother and metropolis of the rest.” And although the good people of this country are *now* commanded by those “in authority” to keep this day holy, they were, during the Commonwealth, commanded also, from the “authority” *then* existing, to “put down Christmas Day, and all other superstitious festivals;” each command being equally “part and parcel of the law of the land,” equally binding upon all pious and loyal subjects, and in an equal degree essential to “stir up the dull mind of man” to the performance of his duties. It is, at

this time, our duty, according to our Christian lawgivers, to maintain a veneration for this festival; but precisely the contrary was, at one time, binding upon our ancestors. A scarce tract, published in 1648, informs us that on “Wednesday, December 22, 1647, the crier of Canterbury, *by the appointment of Master Maior*, openly proclaimed that Christmas Day, and all other superstitious festivals should be put down, and that a market should be kept on Christmas Day.” And among the single sheets preserved in the British Museum, is *an order of p̄arliament*, December 24, 1652, directing “that no observation shall be had of the five-and-twentieth day of December, commonly called Christmas Day; nor any solemnity used or exercised in churches upon that day in respect thereof*.”

Leaving the observers of this festival to settle their own differences, it may be well to proceed to trace the source from whence an observance of Christmas may have been derived; and this source appears to be two-fold; the first, a festival held in Pagan Rome; the other held sacred by the several Northern European nations; and as both occurred at the same season of the year, they appear to have been naturalized by the Roman Catholic church, and entitled the Mass of Christ, under the plea of commemorating the birth of Jesus.

The mass of Christ was the mass or eucharist celebrated on the assumed birthday of Christ. To make religion bend to the Pagan prejudices of the people, is an invariable feature in the records of ecclesiastical history. The heathens, even more than the Jews, were averse to the simplicity of the Christian religion; and with the view to their national conversion—not from vice and the practice of abominable rites—hardly even from the *objects* of their worship,—a project was formed, in the third century, for the purpose

* See Brand's *Popular Antiquities*, vol. i.

of permitting the new converts to Christianity to observe the festivals of the countries in which they resided, subject to one most remarkable condition : that, “instead of celebrating those days to the honour and in the name of heathen gods, they should dedicate them, and reckon them all sacred to the memory of some martyr or Christian saint;” for it was argued that “the simple and unskilled multitude, by reason of corporeal delights, remained in the error of idols ; in order, therefore, that the ‘*principal thing*’ might be corrected in them, and that, instead of their own vain worship, they should turn their eyes upon God, they were to be permitted at the memories of holy martyrs *to make merry*, and to delight themselves; and *be dissolved into joy**.” These “pious” and “devout” instructions would seem to have met with the most ample success among our heathen ancestors ; who, when they offered human and other sacrifices to the god ODIN, concluded the ceremony with drinking the healths of their several gods. This custom the *Christian missionaries* could not or would not abolish ; and therefore they incorporated it with their religious ceremonies, directing that instead of ODIN, NIORD, and BRAGE, their converts should drink the health of the saints, of Jesus, and of God! And, in after times, we learn from Bede, that Pope Gregory, in his letter to Militus, thus instructs him : “Whereas the people were accustomed to sacrifice many oxen in honour of demons, let them celebrate a religious and solemn festival, and not slay the animals to the devil, but eat them themselves, to the praise of God!!!” It also appears that St. Augustine and forty other monks were dispatched by Gregory to erect temples *to the worship of God* in our island ; in which project their adoption of the Pagan practices mainly caused them to be

* See Mallett’s *Northern Antiquities*.

successful. The heathen temples, with their altars, were left standing entire, but were appropriated to the *new* religion, and continued so to the period of the Protestant reformation, when these altars were taken down and destroyed. So attached, however, were the “simple and unskilled multitude,” and the artful and well-skilled priesthood, to what had been the establishments of Catholicism, that Archbishop Laud and others succeeded in re-establishing altars, and the ceremonies connected therewith, in the Protestant churches; and not only in our own country, but also on the continent, the prostration of all principle was most complete, not merely to the heathen feasts, but likewise to the minor prejudices and habits of Paganism*. The pastimes too, and sports of the English and other northern nations, afford proof in illustration. The WAKES were attempted to be converted into religious institutions, in resemblance of the *agappæ*, or love-feasts of the first Christians; and such were held upon the day of the dedication of the church in each district, or the birthday of the saint whose relics were therein deposited; and at these the people were directed by Edgar “to pray devoutly, and not to betake themselves, as *when they were heathens*, to drunkenness and debauchery:” but it was found in practice impossible strictly to keep the new converts to any observance in which their appetites and passions were not the chief object of gratification; and therefore “the pepal fell to

* The Thracians, the Celts, and the other barbarous tribes settled in Europe, held in contempt every occupation except that of bearing arms; their priests utterly forbade them the use of letters, pretending that *their* doctrines were only for the initiated; and so religiously had this prohibition of the priesthood been observed, that the Saxons, under Louis le Debonnaire, persisted in their resolution of not learning to read, when he, to accommodate them, had the Old and New Testaments turned into verse: they then willingly *sung* them, after their own manner.

letcherie, and songs, and dances, and to glotony and sinne, and so turned holyness to cursydness; whereof the holy faders ordained the pepal to leve that waking and to fast the evyn which is called vigilia." And in proportion as these festivals regained their old character, they increased in popularity; the people flocked together, and the greater the reputation of the tutelary saint, the larger was the assembly. Hawkers and pedlars attended, and by degrees the religious wake became a secular fair. From these wakes originated the *church ales*; for the parish officers finding that at Christmas the wakes drew together a larger number than upon any other holy days, they, together with the priest, turned them to the account of profit, by collecting money from them, *for the support and repairs of the church*; and, by way of enticement, there was brewed ready for the festival a quantity of strong ale, so that in the churches debauchery and excess of the worst kinds were patronized under the sanction of Christmas and other *holy days*; for when "this huffe cappe—this nectar of life—is set abroad, well is he that can get the soonest to it, where drunken Bacchus bears sway against Christmas, and Easter, and Whitsuntide; and when *he that spends the most at it, is counted the godliest man of all the rest, and most in God's favour, BECAUSE IT IS SPENT IN THE CHURCH!* They bestow that money which is got thereby for the repair of their churches and chapels, books *for the service of God*, cups for the celebration of the sacrament, surplices for Sir John, and *other necessaries**."

The *names* too, as is well known, of our months and days are themselves evidence of their heathen original: thus JANUARY, from the Latin *Januarius*, in honour of Janus, a heathen god selected by Numa to preside over the year: who was thence represented with two faces,—one the

* Strutt's *Sports and Pastimes of the People of England*, p. 325.

old, expressive of his past experience; the other the *new*, looking to the coming year. The first of this month was kept by the heathens as a day of extreme rejoicing, upon which they sacrificed to their god Janus, and indulged in every excess. The Christians first held it as a fast to distinguish themselves *from* the heathen; but it was afterwards conveniently transformed into a pious festival, in commemoration “of the circumcision of our Lord Jesus Christ; who, when eight days old, subjected himself to this law, and *first shed his sacred blood for us*”!!! The heathens by whole nations became Christians, but yet retained their old profanations, and only exchanged the name by which such ceremonies were recognised. The minor and even the unobjectionable customs of the heathen nations received the colour of Christianity; and thus *new year’s gifts*, which were carried to a great extent in pagan Rome, became in England, as elsewhere, nationalized, and assumed a religious character; upon the first day of the year also, truths could be communicated even to the monarch, which, at any other time, would have endangered the life of the party. Thus Bishop Latimer is related to have sent as a new year’s gift to Henry VIII. this appropriate present—a New Testament, richly illuminated, with an inscription on its cover—“*Fornicators and Adulterers cannot enter into the Kingdom of Heaven*”!!!—a gift, provided a Bishop Latimer could have been found to present it, which might not have been without its use or applicability in days not long gone by.

FEBRUARY, from *Februalis*, one of the names of Juno. The second day of this month the heathens kept as a festival, on which sacrifices for the *souls* of their ancestors were offered to Pluto; and the Church of England has appointed the second of February as a festival-day, dedicated, not to the infernal deity, but to “the Purification of the Blessed

Virgin.” The Church commentators inform us that the peculiar advantage of this festival is its “being the properest and most necessary season to receive the impression of piety and virtue;” and they add—impiously add—that “*so it is then most acceptable to God*”.

Easter, a feast of the Church held in commemoration of the resurrection of Jesus; the derivation of which is also mainly heathen, as well in the character of its observances as in the more palpable import of its title,—from *Eastre*, a heathen goddess, whose festival was observed in the month of April with great pomp and circumstance. From the second to the fourth centuries the Western and Eastern Churches fiercely disputed the fitting season for its observance; but at length the Nicene Council terminated the controversy, by commanding *all* to adopt the practice of the Western Church: and the same Council also decreed, that, as the Passover was held by the Jews on the day of the new moon, Easter should not be observed at the same time, but on the Sunday succeeding the full moon following the 21st of March.

Among the Northern nations there were three great religious festivals; the first of which was celebrated at the winter solstice, and was called, by pre-eminence, the “*Mother Night*,” it being the longest, and, as was stated, the night upon which the world was created. The second was held in honour of the Earth, or the goddess *Frigga*, to request of her pleasures, fruitfulness, and victory. The third, in honour of *Odin*, was celebrated at the commencement of Spring. But of these several institutions, the *Mother Night* took the pre-eminence, as from it was dated the commencement of the year, which was computed from one winter solstice to another. It was held as a feast, celebrated in honour of *Thor*; and, in order to ob-

* Nelson.

tain fruitful seasons and a propitious year, sacrifices, feasting, dances, nocturnal assemblies, and all the demonstrations of dissolute joy, were then practised by the Northern nations. The name of this festival was *Yule*, or *Jule*; and it is a remarkable fact that this term, or some other springing therefrom, is even now used in parts of England, and also on the Continent, as expressive of the *nativity of Christ*. In Sweden and Norway, particularly, the old word is retained; in France it is converted into *Noël*, and in our own country into *Yule-tide*. The Yule clog, Yule dough, and other minor Christmas customs, may be deemed to be illustrative of the heathen character of Christmas and most of its attendant observances. When Paganism gave place to what was styled Christianity, the priests tolerated many of the ancient pastimes, and not only authorized a feast at the winter solstice, which they changed to the honour of the "Nativity," from that of the pagan god *Thor*, but actually, in this instance, and contrary to their general practice, suffered this feast to retain its original pagan appellation of *Yule-tide*, which "by progressive degrees became synonymous with that of Christmas, though retained only among the vulgar, who soon forgot its primitive signification*." In conformity with this species of *conversion*, the old practice in this country of lighting up churches on Christmas Eve was borrowed from a heathen ceremony at *Yule-tide*, or the feast of *Thor*, a deity typified as the Sun; but "*the Fathers*" represented this practice as the "Light" which was about to be born into the world. In the North of England Yule songs are still sung, whilst elsewhere the priests substituted others, bearing a reference to the "Nativity," and which are the characteristic "Christmas Carols." Some authorities, how-

* *Calendaria*, vol. ii. p. 345.

ever, gravely asserted that Angels first introduced the custom of singing these "divine" songs at "*the Nativity of our Lord*": in order, however, that these compositions may fairly be compared with poetry of merely a human character, take the following specimen from Davies Gilbert's collection, and which were set to music*.

I.

A virgin most pure, as the prophets do tell,
Has brought forth a baby, as it hath befell,
To be our Redeemer from death, hell, and sin,
Which Adam's transgressions had wrapped us in.

Chorus.

Aye, and therefore be you merry,
Rejoice and be you merry ;
Set sorrow aside,
Christ Jesus our Saviour was born on this tide.

II.

In Bethlehem, in Jewry, a city there was,
Where Joseph and Mary together did pass ;
And there to be taxed with many a one mo',
For Cæsar commanded the same should be so.

Aye, and therefore be you merry, &c.

III.

But when they had entered the city so fair,
A number of people so mighty was there,
That Joseph and Mary, whose substance was small,
Could find in the inn there no lodging at all.

Aye, and therefore be you merry, &c.

IV.

Then were they constrained in a stable to lye,
Where horses and asses they used for to tie ;
Their lodging so simple they took it no scorn,
But against the next morning our Saviour was born.

Aye, and therefore be you merry, &c.

* *Ancient Christmas Carols, with the Tunes to which they were formerly sung in the West of England.*

V.

The King of all Kings to this world being brought,
 Small store of fine linen to wrap him was sought ;
 And when she had swaddled her young son so sweet,
 Within an ox manger she laid him to sleep.

Aye, and therefore be you merry, &c.

VI.

Then God sent an angel from heaven so high,
 To certain poor shepherds in fields where they lye,
 And bade them no longer in sorrow to stay,
 Because that our Saviour was born on this day.

Aye, and therefore be you merry, &c.

VII.

Then presently after the shepherds did spy
 A number of angels that stood in the sky ;
 They joyfully talked and sweetly did sing—
 "To God be all glory—our heavenly king."

Aye, and therefore be you merry,
 Rejoice and be you merry ;
 Set sorrow aside,
 Christ Jesus our Saviour was born on this tide.

On Christmas Day these Carols took the place of Psalms in the churches, especially at afternoon service, the whole congregation joining ; and at the end the parish-clerk declared, in a loud voice, his wishes for a merry Christmas and happy new year to all the assembly.

With the Romans the feast in honour of Saturn was the most esteemed, and during its celebration all classes gave themselves up to mirth and feasting :—friends sent presents to each other ; masters treated their slaves upon an equal footing ; schools kept holiday ; and the senate did not sit. At first it was held but for one day, and that on the 19th of December ; afterwards for three days ; and, by the order of Caligula, for five days ; two days were then added, (bringing the ceremonies up to the 26th of December,) and called "Sigillaria," from small images, which

were sent as presents by parents to their children,—a custom which may illustrate the Christian practice on the day of the “Holy Innocents,” which immediately succeeds Christmas Day. At the Saturnalia, and at the feast of Bacchus, held about the same season, all restraints were removed from every rank of society, and the whole people wanted in the indulgence of sensual gratification. Bacchus was represented as a boy, and it is probable that, with a view of preserving to the people their accustomed idea of a child, this period was preferred as the commemoration of the nativity of Jesus; and the whole festive season, with all its impurities—instead of being any longer, as among our ancestors, the feast of Yule, or, as with the Romans, the “*Saturnalia*”—was reformed; not in substance, not in manners, not in morals, but in *name* merely; being transformed into a sacred feast in honour of the birth of Jesus. The reasons for those monstrous and blasphemous, though it must be allowed very characteristic, proceedings, are obvious; transferring, as they did, to a national religious Establishment nearly all the power and *profit* which could be derived from encouraging, under the sacred name of religion, even the grossest ignorance, and the lowest vices of mankind. The heathen origin of Christmas is so palpable, that some of the early Church writers have not been backward even in defending the fact; and in Brand* there is given a portion of a very rare tract, from which it appears, that in 1648 Thomas Warmesley, D.D. wrote a “*Vindication of the Solemnity of the Nativity of Christ*,” in answer to the following questions: Whether this feast had not its rise and growth from Christians’ conformity to the mad feasts of Saturnalia, (kept in December, to Saturn the father of the Gods,) in which there was a sheaf offered to Ceres, god-

* *Popular Antiquities.*

ness of corn, and a hymn to her praise? and, Whether those Christians by name, to cloak it, did not afterwards call it *Yule* and *Christmas*, as though it were for Christ's honour? and, Whether it be not yet called *Yule*, and the mad plays wherewith it is celebrated, like those Saturnalia, are they not our *Yule* games? and, Whether, from the gifts of the heathens to their friends on the calendar of January, did not arise our new year's gifts? To these questions the Rev. Doctor, in the above-mentioned Work, makes a reply which, like many other replies, tends—not to the refutation, but to the confirmation of the charge. What, (he argues,) if it should appear that the time of this festival *doth* comply with the time of the heathen Saturnalia,—*this leaves no charge of impiety upon it!* “for, since things are best cured by contraries, it was both *wisdom* and *piety* in the ancient Christians, whose work it was to *convert* the heathen from such, as well as other superstitions and miscarriages, to *vindicate such times from that service of the devil, by appointing the same to the more solemn and especial service of God.*” “Christmas Carols,” he observes, “if used with Christian piety, may be profitable, if they be sung with grace in the heart! New year's gifts, if performed *without superstition*, may be harmless provocations to Christian love”! As it was the custom to present these gifts to the clergy, and the author of the objections was also a clergyman, he is thus rather acutely advised by the more *prudent* Doctor: —“Trouble not yourself: if *you* dislike new year's gifts, I would advise your parishioners not to trouble *your conscience* with them, and all will be well again.”

During the Roman Saturnalia, slaves were not merely put by their masters on an equality with themselves, but their masters occasionally waited upon them, honouring them with mock titles, and permitting them to assume

their own state and deportment. Even this practice was transferred to our Christmas ceremonies; thus the society belonging to Lincoln's Inn had anciently an officer who was honoured with the mock title of "King of Christmas," and he presided in the hall upon that day: this temporary potentate had a marshal and a steward to attend upon him. Upon Childermas Day there was another officer, denominated the "King of the Cockneys." The "King of the Bean," too, was chosen upon the vigil of the Epiphany; and at the Court of Edward III. the King's title was conferred, during this festive season, upon His Majesty's trumpeter,—an exchange, perhaps, that kings might often make without disadvantage, at least, to their subjects; all these transpositions at Christmas being derived, according to Selden, "from the ancient Saturnalia, or feast of Saturn." These fooleries were exceedingly popular, and were practised in defiance, at first, of the threatenings and remonstrances of *some* of the clergy; but this accommodating class of men, finding it desirable to follow the stream of vulgar prejudice, eventually satisfied themselves with changing merely the titles of their religious ceremonies, so that the same unhallowed orgies which had disgraced the worship of a heathen deity, were now dedicated to the service of the Almighty, and deemed to be divinely appointed rites.

From this stock branched out a variety of unseemly and immoral sports, but none of them more outrageous than the one entitled the "*Festival of Fools*," which, at the festive seasons, formed a part of "*divine service*"—when rites and ceremonies, pretending to be of the most sacred character, were turned into ridicule, the priests themselves participating in the degrading exhibitions. In each of the cathedral churches there was elected, at such periods, a "Bishop, or Archbishop of Fools"; and in the

churches immediately dependent upon the Papal See, a "Pope of Fools". These mock pontiffs had a suite of ecclesiastics to attend upon, and assist at, what they impiously called "*divine service*"; and, attired in the dresses of players and buffoons, as was the custom in the heathen *solemnities*, they were accompanied by crowds of the laity, some disguised with masks, and others dressed as females, in which garb they imitated the manners and the behaviour of the lowest and most abandoned classes of society.

During such "*divine service*," this motley group both of clergy and laity assembled in church: some of them sang indecent songs in the choir; others ate; others drank; others played at dice upon the altar, by the side of the priest whilst celebrating Mass. And after such "*solemnities*," they ran about the church, leaping, dancing, and exposing themselves in the most unseemly attitudes, as had been the practice in honour of the heathen deities. Another part of the ceremony in remembrance of the "*nativity of our Lord*," was to shave the "*Precentor of Fools*" upon a stage erected before the church door; and during the operation his office was to amuse the populace with lewd and vulgar discourses. The "*Pope of Fools*" performed "*divine service*," habited (not inappropriately) in the pontifical garments; and, thus attired, gave his benediction to the people. He was afterwards drawn in an open carriage, attended by a train of ecclesiastics and laymen, promiscuously mingled together; and many of the most profligate of the latter *assumed* clerical habits, in order to give "*their impious fooleries the greater effect**." In the fourteenth century, at this season, we had the "*King of Fools*"; and the election and investment of the "*Boy Bishop*" appears to have been derived from the Festival of Fools: the whole affording a siu-

* See Strutt's *Sports and Pastimes*.

gularly effective comment on the Rev. Doctor's "*Vindication of the Solemnity of the Nativity of Christ*," and well displaying "the wisdom and piety of the ancient Christians in *working by contraries*, to convert the heathen from superstition, and vindicate such times, by appointing them to the solemn service of God." But if the "wisdom and piety" of these parties failed in their experiments upon the human species, it would appear that they were more successful with the brute creation; in attestation of which, let the following statement satisfy the most sceptical: "A superstitious notion prevails in the western parts of Devonshire, that at twelve o'clock at night, on Christmas Eve, the oxen in their stalls are always found on their knees, as in an *attitude of devotion*; and that since the alteration of the style they continue to do this, only on the eve of *Old Christmas Day*. An honest countryman living on the edge of St. Stephen's Down, in Cornwall, informed me, October 28, 1790, that he once, with some others, made a trial of the above; and watching several oxen in their stalls, at twelve o'clock at night they observed the *two oldest oxen only* fall upon their knees, *and make a cruel moan like Christian creatures**!! There is an old print of the Nativity, in which the oxen in the stable, near Jesus and his mother, are actually represented on their knees, and in a suppliant posture!!!

We shall be told that many of the monstrous scenes of depravity, or of folly, which have been related, belonged to times that are long gone by; that they were perversions of institutions in themselves good; and that now a "reasonable service" supplies the place of our ancient pastimes. It will be admitted that, in their grosser characteristics, the time is gone by for the toleration of such impurities; and doubtless the progress of enlightenment would have

* See Brand's *Popular Antiquities*.

entirely dissipated them, had there not been a religious character attached thereto. But the religion which adopted them is unchanged; the Church which claimed the right to “decree rites and ceremonies” is still the National Church; its support is still imperative as “a part and parcel of the law of the land”; and those who do not keep to the faith of certain creeds agreeably to law, will now, as then, “without doubt perish everlastingly”: the denunciations, too, against those who would expose them are not wanting in ferocity; and the iniquity of connecting *such* institutions, having *such* an original, with the Divine laws, is still continued. It may safely be denied that even the grossest practices recorded were a “*perversion*” of the original institution of these observances; it having been shown that their institution was not almost—but altogether—*heathen*, not being esteemed the institution of the Gospel until kings and priests so willed it, impiously daring to affix them to enlightened principles by means of a character of piety and holiness. But we are told, and that too in defiance of history and of fact, that “the festivals of the *Christian Church*” (that is, not the Church of God, but that Church which is “part and parcel of the law of the land,”) “were instituted for the most amiable purposes, to keep up a steady and regular succession of religious observances.” And one of the highest Church authorities upon these subjects informs us, that the way to keep those 216 *holy days* of the English Church, is by setting them apart for the exercise of religious duties, and by abstaining from worldly recreations, as such might hinder our attendance upon the worship of God. Yet a Protestant king, (James I.,) the “Defender of the Faith,” and the legal head of this same Church, at a period not long preceding the authority last quoted, “did

* Brady, *Clavis Calendaria*.

justly" (to use his own words,) "rebuke some puritans and precise people, who had punished our good people in Lancashire for using their lawful recreations and honest exercises on Sundays, and other holy days, after the afternoon sermon: it is our will that, *after divine service*, our good people be not disturbed from any lawful recreation, such as dancing, either for men or women; archery for men, leaping, vaulting, nor for having Maypoles, nor Whitsun ales, nor morris dancers and other sports, so as the same may be had without neglect of divine service."

These references to the Established Church are, however, only incidental, the design of these remarks being more the statement of facts than of opinions; and from those facts it should seem, that nearly the whole of the religious bodies of this and all other "Christian countries," have sanctified the leaders of heathenism and of idolatry: thus, we find certain feasts celebrated with certain observances in honour of heathen deities; thence we follow the same rites to the Roman Catholic Missal, and there observe that the heathen institutions are sanctioned almost without disguise: from this we proceed to the "Book of Common Prayer, and Administration of the Sacrament, and other Rites and Ceremonies, according to the Use of the Church of England"; and there we are presented with the Roman Catholic Calendar, somewhat curtailed, but still the lessons, collects, &c., almost wholly *unreformed*: thence we direct our attention to the Presbyterians, who observe the Thursdays previous to receiving the Lord's Supper as solemn fasts, and who enact that out of the "*visible church* there is no ordinary possibility of salvation," and who almost claim a sort of divine right for the Presbyterian form of church government.

Mr. Wesley, as the great lawgiver of the Methodists, boasts, that his sect "adhere to all that they learned when

they were children in their Catechism and Common Prayer Book ; that they agree with the Church of England in externals and circumstantials ; that they observe the Church days of fasting and abstinence, the forty days of Lent, the Ember Days, the Rogation Days, and all the Fridays in the year, except Christmas Day."

A portion of the Unitarian body are also distinguished by their acquiescence in many of the ceremonial observances of the National Church, and have a reformed "Book of Common Prayer,"—"the seventh edition, with additional Collects," containing "the Liturgy as now used in Essex Street," in which there is the Order for the Morning Prayer every "Lord's day throughout the year, the same to be used with the *proper Collects* upon Christmas Day, Good Friday, Easter Day, and Whitsuntide," together with other imitations of the first-born of the Woman of Babylon ; as regards even the dress of the minister ; the forms of the service ; the prayers, amongst which are those for "the burial of the dead," "prayers to be used in His Majesty's navy every day," "*prayers* before a *fight* at sea," and "prayers for single persons that cannot join with others by reason of the fight."

Thus the whole presents, as far as English Dissenters are concerned, a striking contrast to that of their sturdy predecessors in the primitive times of dissent from Popery: the whole furnishing but too strong a ground for the accusation, that amongst them "a resemblance to the Church is rather affected than avoided ; their places of worship are no more called meetings, but chapels ; their ministers assume the title of Reverend ; in some cases both the liturgy and surplice are used. The Dissenting chapels are like *cheap shops* ; there is more *show* in their windows, more *bowing for custom*, than among the *old-*

established traders; but the difference is in the quality, not in the appearance of the article.*”

Still, desirous as the National Church may be to sustain its monopoly of heathenism and popery, by excluding from the market its less privileged competitors, it is a fair subject for scepticism as to whether its hierarchy and clergy can feel indebted to the discretion or good taste of their advocate, in what some might feel as but too true an application to their avocations of the phraseology of mercantile pursuits.

THE SABBATH.—To the Sabbath is apportioned a pre-eminent position amongst our national and church festivals, and in its discussion there is involved a most elaborate textual controversy; but previously to entering upon an examination of the same, a sketch of the prominent characteristics of the Sabbath may not be deemed unsuitable.

“The Sabbath,”—“the *rest*,”—is the allotment of a given portion of time for special objects, and which objects are of a precise and defined nature. The authority for such an observance must be held to depend, not upon inference or surmise, but upon those distinctive marks which appertain to all the positive institutions of the Deity, and in regard to which their chief purposes are presumed to consist. These distinctive marks are, 1. Divine authority; 2. Time; 3. Place; 4. Upon whom binding; 5. *How* to be observed, and for what purposes; 6. Whether limited as to time, or perpetual.

The argument ranges under three divisions:—First, The Paraisaical Sabbath; second, The Jewish Sabbath; third, The Christian Sabbath, or “Lord’s Day.”

* *Letter to Henry Brougham, Esq., upon his Durham Speech, and three Articles in the last Edinburgh Review upon the Support of the Clergy.* 1823.

The Paradisaical Sabbath.—The authority for such an observance is held to consist in one, and in but one passage of the Scriptures (Genesis ii. 2, 3.), and which passage is deemed to have established, in “the times of man’s innocency,” the institution in question, and to have made it of perpetual and of *universal obligation*.

The Mosaic account of the Creation is of peculiar interest; and although some naturalists and geologists, because of the known existence of certain phænomena, take exception to parts, or even to the whole of that remarkable relation, yet, even could their dissent be fairly sustained, Revelation would not be shaken thereby, the narration being traditional, and not assuming to have been derived from Divine authority. Still, it cannot in fairness be viewed as other than a record of high and peculiar value; and whilst conveyed in a phraseology not in every instance admitting of a strictly literal interpretation, it yet presents single expressions, and entire passages, which are characterized by great sublimity and beauty.

The time occupied in the creation of the material world, and all that it contains, is stated to have been “six days”; a mode, this, of conveying the fact of successive creation, which, if literally taken as six natural days, however well when recorded it might be adapted to the narrow compass of the human understanding, but ill comports with suitable conceptions of the works of the great Architect of the Universe. These days, numbered from one to six, may rather be deemed to express *periods**, separated from each other by such portions of time as the maturing of each distinct part of creation would, agreeably to the laws of Nature, require: hence, the following progression in the narration:—

* See Michaelis. See also a valuable article in *The Freethinking Christian’s Quarterly Register*, 1823,—“*Fall of Man disproved.*”

First, The causing that which had been in chaotic darkness, and without form and void, to be visited with light ; then the division of the firmament ; then the separation of the land from the waters ; then “every herb of the field, and every plant” ; then they were made productive by “a mist going up from the earth and watering the whole face of the ground” ; from thence vegetation advanced,—the earth brought forth grass, the herbs yielded seed, and the fruit-trees yielded fruit ; then the creation of fish ; and subsequently, the fowls of the air, the beasts of the forest, together with “everything that creepeth upon the earth” ; and when the “heavens and the earth were *finished*, and the host of them,” then man was made in the image (*i. e.* the representative) of God, with dominion over the creation thus formed.

This view of successive creation, at periods of time probably far removed from each other, tends wholly to relieve the Bible history of the Creation from the presumed contradiction to its statements which is furnished by well-attested geological remains, the existence of which is deemed to be wholly incompatible with confining the operations recorded to six successive natural days, or generally to a strictly literal interpretation of the narrative ; it also receives support from the known laws which are considered to govern life, whether animate or inanimate.

“Species may have been created in succession, at such times, and in such places, as to enable them to multiply and endure for an appointed period, and occupy an appointed space on the globe. In order to explain this theory, let us suppose every living thing to be destroyed in the Western hemisphere, both on the land and in the ocean, and permission to be given to man to people this great desert, by transporting into it animals and plants from the Eastern hemisphere, a strict prohibition being

enforced against introducing two original stocks of the same species. Now the result, we conceive, of such a mode of colonizing would correspond exactly, so far as regards the grouping of animals and plants, with that now observed throughout the globe. It would be necessary for naturalists, before they imported species into particular localities, to study attentively the climate and other physical conditions of each spot. It would be no less requisite to introduce the different species in succession, so that each plant and animal might have time and opportunity to multiply before the species destined to prey upon it was admitted. Many herbs and shrubs, for example, must spread far and wide before the sheep, the deer, and the goat could be allowed to enter, lest they should devour and annihilate the original stocks of many plants, and then perish themselves for want of food. The above-mentioned herbivorous animals in their turn must be permitted to make considerable progress before the entrance of the first pair of wolves and lions. Insects must be allowed to swarm before the swallow could be permitted to skim through the air and feast on thousands at one repast*." And assuming Lyell's theory to be well founded, it admirably comports with this view of the Mosaic history of the Creation, and, as a justification for its introduction in this case, will sufficiently tend to aid us in the subsequent argument as to the total irrelevancy of the seventh day named in this connexion to *any institution*, or as binding upon man any sabbatical observance whatever. At the same time we may feel deeply impressed with the consciousness that no other necessity could exist for successive and distant periods of creation, than the submission of all animal and vegetable life to those laws which have been affixed to each by the Creator of heaven and earth; and that, did it comport

* Lyell's *Geology*, vol. ii. pp. 124, 125.

with his laws, the Being who said “‘Let there be light,’ and there was light,” could, in an inconceivably small portion of time, call myriads of worlds, and their inhabitants, into existence.

“And on the seventh day God ended his work which he had made; and *he rested* on the seventh day from all his work which he had made. And God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it; because that in it he had rested from all his work which God created and made*.” This simple relation—the phraseology of which cannot well be taken *literally*, partaking as it does of the same character, and requiring an application of the same principles of interpretation as the preceding narration—has been made to bend to the following large hypothesis, That it records the establishment of a Sabbatical Institution, to be binding upon the whole of mankind for ever, taking in of course the savage and the civilized man; the believer in God, and also those that may never have heard of his name; the Jew and the idolater; the subject of the kingdom of God, and the subject of what in the New Testament is called the kingdom of Satan (*i. e.* the adversary, the world)!

“*God rested on the seventh day, and sanctified it.*” It has already been intimated that the seventh day in common with the first, to the sixth, can have no reference to the natural day which is so entitled; and in the summing up of the preceding account of the Creation, the detail of the seven distinct and successive days is thus passed by: “These are the generations of the heavens and of the earth *when they were created, in the day that the Lord God made the earth and the heavens†.*” The idea, indeed, of the Creator of the Universe literally requiring rest, would truly be the bringing down to the narrow compass of hu-

* Gen. ii. 2, 3.

† *Ibid.* ii. 4.

man conception, the Maker of heaven and earth. "Hast thou not heard, that the everlasting God, the Lord, the Creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not, neither is weary*?" "God is not like to some dull artificer, having need of sleep, and weary of his labours; for he spake the word only, and all things were made. . . . The meaning of the text is, that God then desisted from adding anything *de novo* unto the world by him created †."

But, passing by all these views, let the case be met in its literal aspect, it being put thus by Michaelis:—

"Moses *found* a custom among the people, *established* from the very earliest period, by which *they solemnized the Sabbath day*, and it is probable that the Egyptians had left this day to them as a day of rest, at least he describes this solemnity as instituted by God immediately after the creation †."

Scriptural evidence by which the assertions of Michaelis can be supported is much wanting. There is a total absence of proof that Moses *found* any species of sabbatical observance, even known to, much less established amongst, the Israelites: there is not a phrase which can admit of an inference that their task-masters permitted them to have the seventh day, or any other day, free from labour, and appropriated to sabbatical observances; neither do the verses in Genesis prove that the Sabbath, or any other solemnity designed for the observance of mankind, *was then commanded or instituted by God*. God gave one commandment, and but one, to our first parent:—"And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it §."

* Isa. xl. 28.

† Heylin, *History of the Sabbath*, p. 335.

‡ Michaelis's *Commentaries on the Laws of Moses*, vol. iii. p. 156.

§ Gen. ii. 16, 17.

Institutions were given as the men selected by God increased in numbers, in wants, and in civilization. Had the Sabbath been thus early commanded,—had its observance been conceded to the Israelites by the Egyptians,—had Moses really “*found*” it an existing institution when he became their divinely appointed leader,—had there been a tradition even of its existence,—how is it that there is no reference to such throughout the patriarchal ages, when very minute details are given of comparatively unimportant matters? How is it that of Abraham, who whilst because of his obedience to the commands of God he received the distinguished honour of having assured unto him, that in his seed all nations of the earth should be blessed, yet that even of him there should be no record that he was an observer of a “solemnity instituted by God immediately after the creation,”—he who even when in the land of the Philistines “planted a grove in Beersheba, and *called there on the name of the Lord, the everlasting God,*” and who brought up his children and his household to follow in his footsteps? How can it be accounted for, if thus instituted, and if the “Egyptians had left the Israelites this day as a day of rest,” that when they had escaped from slavery, and were their own masters, they should have so wholly forgotten the observance of this “*established solemnity,*” that they should require to be drilled into it by direct Divine interference—by an extraordinary miracle, and by the reiterated commands of their leader; and that, despite even of such means to effect its then establishment amongst them, it yet “came to pass that there went out some of the people to gather (manna) on the seventh day, and they found none,” and in consequence of this disobedience on the part of some to the command *then* given, “the Lord said unto Moses, How long *refuse* ye to keep my commandments and my laws? . . . The Lord hath given *you* the sabbath, there-

fore he giveth you (*i. e.* for the *first* time) on the sixth day the bread of two days : abide ye every man in his place, let no man go out of his place on the seventh day. *So the people rested on the seventh day*.*”?

The kind of disobedience in the instance above cited, proves a previous ignorance of any such institution. So in the earlier part of the same chapter the effect upon “the rulers” of the gathering by some of a double quantity of manna, induces the same conclusion. For of the manna they were to gather one omer for each man : “And Moses said, Let no man leave of it till the morning;” but “it came to pass that on the sixth day they gathered two omers for one man.” This being deemed to be a violation of the previous command, and the *first* sabbath day not having yet taken place, “*all the rulers of the congregation came and told Moses.*” And Moses “said unto them, This is that which the Lord hath said, *Tomorrow is the rest of the holy sabbath unto the Lord.*” And then follow such directions, in relation to its observance, as are wholly incompatible with a previously known and established institution : “Bake that which ye will bake today, and seethe that which ye will seethe; and that which remaineth over lay up for you to be kept until the morning. And they laid it up till the morning, . . . and it did not stink. . . . And Moses said, Eat that today; for today is a sabbath unto the Lord : today ye shall not find it in the field.”

“The transaction in the wilderness was the *first* actual *institution* of the Sabbath; nor is there in the passage above quoted any intimation that the Sabbath when appointed to be observed was only the *revival* of an ancient institution which had been neglected, forgotten, or suspended; nor is any such neglect imputed either to the inhabitants of the Old World, or to any part of the family

* Exod. xvi. 28, 29.

of Noah ; nor is any permission recorded to dispense with the institutions during the captivity of the Jews in Egypt, or on any other public emergency*.”

But apart from all these views, and taking the two verses in Genesis literally as they stand, *they relate that which God did on the seventh day, and also why he did it* : but they do not furnish a record of *any* institution ; neither do they contain any command ; nor do they refer to, *as binding upon man*, a sabbatical or any other observance whatever. If indeed such an institution was then established, it was so by God, and is *not commanded for the observance of man*. If an *example* was then set, it was an example as affecting God alone ; the literal record being, that on the seventh day *God* having ended *his* work, *he* rested on that day ; he blessed and sanctified it.” And for what purpose ? “*Because* that on it he had rested from all his work which God created and made.”

It should be borne in mind that this statement was written from two to three thousand years *after* the time of Adam ; that the author was a Jew, and that he wrote at a period when the Sabbath had been unequivocally established amongst his countrymen. Moses having descended from Mount Sinai, God through him delivered his will to the people. This communication was that which is so appropriately entitled *Commandments* ; and to enforce which the authority from whence they emanated might be supposed, as it related to God, to supersede *any statement of reasons for the same* ; yet the record of the Decalogue as contained in the twentieth chapter of Exodus presents a verse (the 11th) which is almost identical with the passages in Genesis ; and with regard to which, as it interferes with the character and tends to destroy the unity of that sacred document, the suggestion as to how far it was originally a

* Paley, vol. ii. p. 260.

marginal note, and subsequently incorporated with the text, may not be undeserving of attention; especially as the corresponding enumeration of the Ten Commandments in the fifth chapter of Deuteronomy does not present any reference to the point contained in the above verse. But in either case it is abundantly manifest that had the observance been, *prior* to the time of Moses, an *established* one amongst the Jews, their ignorance of its characteristics, and of their own practices too, would require a miracle to account for it, and even then would place the authority of the prophet, as it relates to Sabbaths, in a shape more than questionable. "Wherefore I caused them to go forth out of the land of Egypt, and brought them into the wilderness; and I gave them my statutes, and showed them my judgements. . . . Moreover also I *gave them* (the Jews, not the whole of mankind, not from the 'very earliest period,' but after they were 'brought forth from Egypt,') my sabbaths, (not because the Deity had finished the creation in six days, and rested on the seventh, but) to be a *sign* between me and them, that they might know that I am the Lord that *sanctify them**."

* Ezek. xx. 10—12.

CHAPTER II.

THE JEWISH SABBATH.

IT being conceded that the observance of a Sabbath ought not to rest upon inference,—that the knowledge of such an institution is not derivable from nature,—and that to be binding upon the believers of the Gospel of Jesus, or upon all mankind, it must expressly and positively be commanded by Divine authority to be upon these parties thus binding, the nature of our inquiries becomes at once narrowed, and, what is still better, distinct and defined.

It has been seen that the *Paradisaical Sabbath* is wholly wanting in the inseparable characteristics of a *positive* or *perpetual institution*; and the importance of the point being distinctly established will be correctly estimated by a perusal of the writings of some of the best informed and most liberal amongst the defenders of the observance of the modern Sabbath,—these parties having admitted that the sabbatical observance instituted by Moses in the wilderness, and subsequently commanded by God on Mount Sinai, was a command and an institution exclusively Jewish, and as such necessarily sharing the fate of all the other Jewish institutions, upon the destruction of their national polity. “To your opinions respecting the abolition of the Jewish ceremonial rites, and amongst them that of *the Sabbath*, I cordially assent. I admit, with yourself and Paley and Beausobre, that *no mention is made of a Sabbath before the sojourn of the Israelites in the wilder-*

ness;—I grant that no passage is to be found in the *New Testament* directing the observance of a Sabbath;—nay, more, I allow that our Saviour himself, though no *Sabbath breaker*, as you represent him, did, as Lord of the Sabbath, both by word and deed, give intimation to the Jews of *its approaching dissolution*, and that St. Paul did exhort his converts *to omit the observance of this and other ordinances, which CHRIST HAD AS IT WERE BLOTTED OUT,—NAILING THEM TO THE CROSS*.*”

This clear, comprehensive and true statement as to the Scriptural evidence touching the Sabbath, and also the joint authorities of the Messiah and of Paul, might be supposed to be, not almost, but altogether decisive as to the *Divine authority* for the present observance thereof: but it is not so, not even with the candid and enlightened author from whose work the passage is selected; and it therefore becomes the more necessary to recur to the broad and distinctive features which characterize the Jewish Sabbath, as, in regard to *authority*, it, and it alone, has the essential marks of a positive and Divine institution.

First, Its Divine authority.

The Israelites when in the wilderness were commanded to gather on the sixth day a double portion of manna; for “the Lord hath said, Tomorrow is the *rest* of the holy sabbath unto the Lord. . . . Six days ye shall gather it; but on the seventh day, which is the sabbath, in it there shall be none.” This, as has been conceded by the late (T. S. Hughes) Christian Advocate of Cambridge, by Paley, and still more recently by Dr. Whately, the present Archbishop of Dublin, is not merely the first institution, but it is *the first time* that the Sabbath is mentioned in the Scriptures; and the whole

* See *A Letter to G. Higgins, Esq., on his Horæ Sabbaticæ*, by the Rev. T. S. Hughes, B.D., Christian Advocate in the University of Cambridge, pp. 4, 5. Rivington, 1826.

relation proves that previously to this time it had had no existence in any shape amongst the people: thus, on the seventh day, without regard to the new command, some went out to gather manna, and “the Lord said unto Moses (as to such persons), How long refuse ye to keep my commandments and my laws? . . . For the Lord hath given you the sabbath, therefore he giveth you on the sixth day the bread of two days. . . . So the people *rested* on the seventh day*.” And, finally, the observance by the Jews was sealed on Mount Sinai by the command of God,—“Remember the sabbath day to keep it holy.”

Second, How to be observed.

Abstinence from labour,—a day of *rest*,—ceasing from any kind of work. “Six days shalt thou labour, and do *all* thy work: but the seventh is the sabbath day of the Lord thy God; in it thou shalt *not do any work*, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, *nor thy cattle*, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates†.” “*Whosoever doeth any work on the sabbath day, he shall surely be put to death‡.*”

Third, Upon whom binding, and for what purpose.

Upon the Jewish people *only*, and upon the Jewish so long as, and no longer than, they continued to be the people of God.—“And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, Speak thou unto *the children of Israel*, saying, Verily my sabbaths *ye* shall keep: for it is *a sign* between *me and you* throughout *your* generations; that *ye* may know that I am the Lord that doth *sanctify you* (set you apart)§.”—“Remember that thou wast a servant in the land of Egypt, and that the Lord thy God brought thee out thence. . . . *therefore the Lord thy God commanded thee to keep the sabbath day||.*”—“Blessed is the man that doeth this,

* See Exod. xvi. 28—30.

† *Ibid.* xx. 9, 10.

‡ *Ibid.* xxxi. 15.

§ *Ibid.* xxxi. 12, 13.

|| Deut. v. 15.

and the son of man that layeth hold on it; that keepeth the sabbath from polluting it, and keepeth his hand from doing any evil*.”—“The seventh day is *the sabbath of rest*, an holy convocation; ye shall do no work therein: *it is the sabbath of the Lord in all your dwellings*†.” From these and corresponding passages, we derive a knowledge of this institution,—possessing, as it does, all the distinctive marks which a national observance must necessarily require, and which, in all the principles that make it fitting and imperative upon a nation, it possesses in common with the whole of the other Jewish institutions,—there being no point left in uncertainty,—nothing left to choice,—nothing to inference,—no possibility of controversy or of misconception or error in relation to the *command* for its observance,—the manner,—the time,—the object and the specific punishment in cases of its neglect or abuse; and it cannot be too strongly borne in mind, that in each and in all of these indispensable characteristics the Paradisaical Sabbath is wholly wanting; and in the subsequent pages it will be seen that the Christian Sabbath, or Lord’s Day, is alike destitute of Scriptural authority, and that both are without any claim upon our observance; for, as has been truly, although from the authority from whence derived, somewhat singularly said, “positive precepts are such as require conduct of moral beings which, antecedently to the promulgation of them, was not their duty, and independently of them would never have become their duty‡.”

Where are the “*positive precepts*” for the observance—from the Creation to the end of time, and by *all* mankind whether savage or civilized, whether believers in Revelation

* Isa. lvi. 2.

† Levit. xxiii. 3.

‡ *The Perpetuity of the Sabbath*, by the Rev. Timothy Dwight, LL.D. London edit. p. 8.

or unbelievers—of the “*Paradisaical Sabbath*,” or of the “*Lord’s Day*,” or “*Christian Sabbath*”?

Of the Jewish Sabbath the “positive precepts” have been recounted; and it may be of service to keep these precepts in remembrance.

The term ‘Sabbath’ is applied in the Scriptures to other times and seasons besides the seventh day. Sabbath is also taken for the whole week, likewise for all the Jewish festivals indifferently*. “Keep my sabbaths,”—that is, my feasts, as the Passover, the Feast of Tabernacles. Ezekiel says that “sabbaths are signs that God has given to HIS people, to distinguish them from other nations†.”

Jennings, Michaelis, and a host of minor authorities, assume that “*the Sabbath*” of the Jews was a *religious* institution especially appropriated to divine worship. The latter states that “the seventh day of the week was *ordained* to be a day of *divine worship* ‡;” and the former maintains that “the seventh day of the week was by the Jewish law *peculiarly* consecrated to *the service of God* §.” For Scriptural authority for these assertions, the laws instituting the Sabbath afford little, if any, countenance; and whilst a view the direct reverse, and which should go to affix an *exclusively* civil and political character to the institution, might be contending for too much,—still the position may be held to be tenable which should maintain, that in object and in duties the Jewish Sabbath was essentially a local, civil, and political institution; being no further religious than as *all* the political institutions of the Jews were so, and, in a certain sense, resulting from the peculiar and exclusive relationship in which the He-

* See Levit. xix. 3, 30.

† See Cruden’s *Concordance*.

‡ Michaelis’s *Commentaries on the Laws of Moses*, vol. iii. p. 150.

§ Jennings’s *Jewish Antiquities*, 1823, p. 428.

brews stood towards God and the theocratic government under which they lived.

The seventh day is spoken of as the “*sabbath of rest*,”—a rest from labour, and not one of religious observance,—a rest for the servant in common with the master, “that thy manservant and thy maidservant may *rest as well as thou**;” and for the ox and the ass alike with the manservant and the maidservant. No officer was appointed specifically for Sabbath celebrations; no worship or forms were prescribed for that day, unless the *sacrifice* can be so deemed,—that being the only Sabbath service approaching to religion, the priests making on the Sabbath *double* offering†: but even the double sacrifices were by the *priests only*; they were the token of a peculiar covenant, and the people did not personally join in them,—the people, as such, having no command for any public religious acts, or forms of devotion, on the Sabbath day. The strength of these facts may possibly account for the forced interpretation, as well as the unfitting importance which some commentators have laboured to attach to the passage “God blessed the seventh day, and *hallowed* it‡.” Le Clerc shows that the phrase “hallowing” means abstaining from work or labour: thus in Jeremiah, “Neither carry forth a burden out of your houses on the sabbath day, neither do ye any work, but *hallow* ye the sabbath day, as I commanded your fathers§.” And in the instance of the man|| who gathered sticks on the Sabbath day being stoned to death for the act, the violation was his having *worked*, i. e. not hallowed the Sabbath day. “Doing no work on the Sabbath, and hallowing or sanctifying it, are plainly used as expressions of the same import¶.”

* Deut. v. 14.

† Gen. xx. 11.

|| Numb. xv. 32.

† Numb. xxviii. 9.

§ Jerem. xvii. 22: see also verse 24.

¶ See Jennings, p. 442.

In the passage already quoted from Leviticus, the seventh day is called “the sabbath of rest, *an holy convocation* ;” and Jennings labours to sustain the view, that holy convocations “are most naturally to be understood of assemblies for religious worship*.” He is, however, not supported in this view by the no mean authorities Le Clerc and Vitranga. It is also said that a “holy convocation” means a holy assembly as in our national churches. This view cannot be sustained: it means a *domestic* meeting,—an assembly in their homes, as shown in the latter part of the verse, “The seventh day is a sabbath of rest, an holy convocation; ye shall do no work therein; it is the sabbath of the Lord *in all your dwellings*.” And this statement is followed by one relating to the Passover: “These are the feasts of the Lord, even holy convocations, which ye shall proclaim in their seasons. In the fourteenth day of the first month at even is the Lord’s passover†.”

The Passover was kept *in their houses*, not at the temple; and it may be remarked in passing, that when the Lord’s Supper is, somewhat strangely, compared to the Passover, this distinction is not remembered,—the Jews kept the Passover, not with the priests, but each man at the head of the table in his own house: so with the holy convocation,—a meeting in their own homes. And assuming these views to be a correct representation of the passages in which the phrases “hallowed,” “sanctified,” and “holy convocation” occur, it would be difficult to find any other passages which could be tortured into the support of the doctrine that the Jewish Sabbath was appointed by God for public devotion as well as for rest; and this difficulty is so apparent, that the advocates for its religious character feel the position in which the absence of evidence places their case. “It is a matter of considerable difficulty to

* Jennings, p. 443.

† Levit. xxiii. 4, 5.

determine whether the Levitical law enjoined upon the people the practice of public worship on this day: the *only* thing that *appears* to sanction the opinion is, that it is in several places said to be ‘an holy convocation, which denotes an assembly—a convocation’: *the phrase, however, is too doubtful in its signification to warrant us in affirming this to have been the case**.” And thus, to view the Sabbath as mainly a civil and political, and not even a religious Jewish institution, the following passage from Heylin may not be deemed unimportant: “In the Sabbath, that which was principally aimed at was *rest from labour*, that neither they (the Jews) nor any that belonged unto them should do *any manner of work* upon that day, but sit still and rest themselves. Their meditating on God’s word, or on his goodness manifested in the world’s creation, was to that an accessory; and as for reading the Law in the congregation, *that was not taken up in more than a thousand years after the Law was given*; and being taken up came in by ecclesiastical ordinance only,—*no divine authority*†.”

The Sabbatical Year, and the Year of Jubilee, were also in their arrangement essentially political, being in no other sense religious than as connected, in common with the other Jewish institutions, with their theocracy. And the Sabbatical year was the seventh year’s *rest* for the land of Judea, as well as for the people: “When ye come into the land which I give you, then shall the *land* keep a sabbath unto the Lord‡.” There was to be a total cessation from agricultural labour; for “thou shalt neither sow thy field, nor prune thy vineyard§.” “Six years thou shalt sow thy

* See *Holden on the Christian Sabbath*, ch. iii.; and Carpenter’s *Introduction to the Study of the Scriptures*, p. 444.

† Heylin’s *History of the Sabbath*, p. 435, 2nd edit. 1723.

‡ Levit. xxv. 2.

§ Levit. xxv. 4.

land, and shalt gather in the fruits thereof: but the seventh year thou shalt let it rest and lie still; *that the poor of thy people may eat*: and what they leave, the beasts of the field shall eat. In like manner thou shalt deal with thy vineyard, and with thy olive-yard*.” And, as arising out of these important civil and political arrangements, the power and the especial superintendence of *their* God and *their* King is caused to be developed; for, “if ye shall say, What shall we eat the seventh year? behold, we shall not sow, nor gather in our increase: then *I* will command *my* blessing upon you in the sixth year, and *it shall bring forth fruit for three years*†.”

The Sabbatical Year also provided for the release from personal slavery: “If thou buy an Hebrew servant, six years he shall serve: and in the seventh he shall go out free for nothing †.” For the remission of debts: “At the end of every seven years thou shalt make a release. And this is the manner of the release: Every creditor that lendeth ought unto his neighbour shall release it; he shall not exact it of his neighbour, or of his brother; *because it is called the Lord’s release*§.” During this year also the Law was appointed to be read at the Feast of Tabernacles: “And Moses commanded them, saying, At the end of every seven years, in the solemnity of the year of release, in the feast of tabernacles, when all Israel is come to appear before the Lord thy God in the place which he shall choose, thou shalt read this law before all Israel in their hearing, that they may hear, and that they may learn, and fear the Lord *your God*, and observe to do all the words of this law, *as long as ye live in the land whither ye go over Jordan to possess*

* Exod. xxiii. 10, 11.

† Exod. xxi. 2.

‡ Levit. xxv. 20, 21.

§ Deut. xv. 1, 2.

*it**.” “Thus,” says Maimonides, “whoever locked up his vineyard, or hedged in his field on the seventh year, broke a commandment ; and so likewise if he gathered all the fruits into his house : all was to be free, and every man’s hand alike in all places.”

The Jubilee was the grand Sabbatical Year, and was ushered in with trumpets throughout all the land of Israel. This was a year of general release, not only from all debts, but of all slaves, and of all lands and possessions which had been sold or otherwise alienated from the families and tribes to which they originally belonged. “And ye shall *hallow* the fiftieth year, AND PROCLAIM LIBERTY THROUGHOUT ALL THE LAND UNTO ALL THE INHABITANTS THEREOF : it shall be a jubilee unto you ; and ye shall return every man unto his possession, and ye shall return every man unto his family. A jubilee shall that fiftieth year be unto you †.”

Thus it is apparent that the same principles of national, civil, and political regulations, run through the seventh-day sabbath, the seventh-year sabbath, and the seven septenaries of years’ sabbath. The seventh-day sabbath appoints that cessation from bodily labour which in any country, but especially in an Asiatic climate, would seem to be desirable for the mental as well as for the bodily well-being of man. The seventh-year sabbath is alike marked by the wisdom and benevolence of its civil and political provisions, it being essential that the land should not be worn out by continual tilling, or man by continual toil. And the Jubilee sanctifies the great principles of the equal liberty and equal privileges of the entire people. The people were made to know the Law by its being publicly read to them every seventh year. The distinctiveness of their

* Deut. xxxi, 10—13.

† See Levit. xxv. 10, 11.

tribes was preserved ; but, unlike their heathen neighbours, they were not divided into *castes* ; they were all equal in the eye of the Law, and their equality was maintained by means of the laws of the Jubilee, and they were saved from the possible existence of that absurd abomination, an hereditary aristocracy ; thus “if God was not the sovereign of the Jewish state, the Law was,—the best and only safe vicegerent of Almighty Providence to which the welfare of human communities can be intrusted. If the Hebrew commonwealth was not a theocracy, it was a nomocracy : on the other hand, if, as we suppose, in the Mosaic polity the civil was subordinate to the religious end, still the immediate well-being of the community was not sacrificed to the more remote object. The Hebrew commonwealth was so constituted as to produce—all circumstances of the times, the situation, and the character of the people considered—as much or more real happiness and independence than any existing or imaginary government of ancient times*.”

Such, then, were the means which the Divine Being, in this early stage of society, adopted for the constantly advancing civilization and improvement of his chosen people, —their worship of him in their national and also in their individual capacity being secured by means of their laws, of the priesthood, the tabernacle, the temple, and other distinct and positive provisions. Hence, the extraordinary assertions of some of the modern defenders of the Sabbath will be seen to be in no small degree at variance with the law and with the testimony : and in the way of illustration, and as from one of a class of writers, take the following positions of Dr. Dwight.

“The Sabbath is the *only* mean ever devised of commu-

* See Millman’s valuable and enlightened “History of the Jews,” *Family Library*, No. V. p. 161.

nicating important instruction to the great mass of mankind." "Wherever the Sabbath is not, there is *no worship, no religion*; man forgets God, and *God forsakes man*; the moral world becomes a desert, where life never springs and beauty never smiles; the beams of the Sun of righteousness never dawn upon the miserable waste; the rains of heaven never descend*."!! And yet, despite of these dogmatical assertions, *the Sabbath* commanded by God on Mount Sinai was local as to its operation, and in some of its minor provisions hardly appropriate out of Judea: it was also limited in duration; and even when combined with sacrifices, and with such other festivals as were likewise entitled sabbaths, was declared by the Prophet to be held by God in a degree of estimation very subordinate to that pure and mental worship which to a spiritual Being was most acceptable: and, as ultimately introductory to such mental worship, the Sabbath, in common with the whole of the Mosaic ritual, was appointed;—for, "To what purpose," says Isaiah, "is the multitude of your sacrifices unto me? saith the Lord....Bring no more vain oblations; incense is an abomination unto me; the new moons *and sabbaths*, the calling of assemblies, I cannot away with....Your appointed *feasts* my soul hateth: they are a trouble unto me; I am weary to bear them....Wash you, make you clean; put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes; cease to do evil; learn to do well; seek judgement, relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widow†."

With the pure and holy and lofty strains of the Prophet the personal conduct and teaching of Jesus and his Apostles will be found very strikingly to accord; and as it relates to the Sabbath, and other Jewish institutions,

* Dwight *On the Sabbath*, pp. 93, 95.

† Isaiah i. 11—17.

Isaiah may be looked upon as their distinguished precursor. The Sabbath was “neglected, not at once and upon the sudden, but leisurely and by degrees. There were *preparatives* unto the Sabbath before it was proclaimed as a law by Moses, and there were some preparatives required before that law of Moses was repealed: these we shall easily discover, if we shall please to look on our Saviour’s actions, who gave the first hint unto his disciples for the abolishing the Sabbath amongst other ceremonies.” The abrogation of the Sabbath shows plainly that it “was no part of the moral law, or law of Nature, there being no law natural which is not perpetual. Tertullian takes it for confest that it was only a *temporary* constitution*.” Jesus, soon after the commencement of his ministry, shocked the sabbatical feelings of his countrymen by permitting his disciples, when passing through the corn-fields, to satisfy their cravings of hunger, and also in his own person by healing the sick and cleansing the leper, on the Sabbath Day: and when accused of doing that which was not lawful by the ruler of the synagogue, who manifested indignation because the sick had been healed on the Sabbath Day, and said unto the people, “There are six days in which men ought to work; in them come and be healed, and not on the sabbath day,” Jesus replies by proclaiming his dispensing power over even the Sabbath. But had the institution been that which certain of its defenders assert it was, namely, a part of the moral law, and given for universal and for *perpetual* observance, then the Messiah had not, and could not have such authority: but in truth, the “sabbath being made for man, and not man for the sabbath, *therefore* the Son of man is Lord [master] even of the sabbath †.” And whilst the

* Heylyn, 401.

† See Matth. xii., Mark ii., Luke xiii.

Jews persecuted Jesus, and “sought to slay him, *because he had done these things on the sabbath day,* Jesus answered them, *My Father worketh hitherto, and I work*; therefore the Jews sought the more to kill him, because he not only had *broken the sabbath*, but said also that God was his Father*.” Thus Jesus persevered in being that “sabbath-breaker” which the author of the *Horæ Sabbaticæ* asserts he was,—his teaching, as well as his conduct, being in attestation thereof; for “it will be plainly seen, that Jesus did *decidedly* and *avowedly* violate the Sabbath †.” The reasoning of the passage stands thus:—An ordinance made *for man*, and not man *for it*, may be dispensed with by my authority: “the Sabbath *is* such an ordinance; *therefore* the Sabbath may be dispensed with by my authority †.”

Jesus came not to destroy the Law and the Prophets, but to *fulfill*: “For verily I say unto you, . . . one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, *till* all be fulfilled.” The Law was local and terminable, and part of its fulfilment rapidly approaching. The ceremonial observances of which the Sabbath formed a part were connected therewith; the dissolution of the national polity was at hand; the middle wall of partition was about to be broken down; the Gentiles were on the eve of admission, in common with the Jews, into a new, a more mental, and a purer relationship towards God. And hence the appropriateness of, as well as necessity for, the conduct of Jesus, who, whilst he made no pretensions to a dispensing power in respect to moral duties, treated the great positive ordinance of the Sabbath as being of very subordinate consideration,—preparatory, doubtless, to the marked condemnation by Paul of its pharisaical observance, and to its

* John v. 16—18.

† Whately, p. 17.

‡ See *Thoughts on the Sabbath*, by the present Archbishop of Dublin.

final extinction as a Divine ordinance, in common with the other ceremonial observances of the Mosaic ritual. "Have ye not read in the law, how that on the sabbath days the priests in the temple profane the sabbath, and are blameless? But I say unto you, that in this place is one greater than the temple*."

"It is true," says Heylyn, "that Jesus did frequently repair unto the synagogues on the Sabbath Day, and did read and expound the Law unto the people." It should, however, be noted, that the synagogue was not appointed by Divine authority; that it did not exist until ages after the institution of the Sabbath; and that Jesus and others, availing themselves of the day, did read and expound the Law, which was a valuable employment on such a day; but there was no religious rite or ceremonial observance in any way connected therewith†.

Paul, following in the footsteps of his great master, thus laments over the members of the church of God who respected outward ordinances: "Wherefore, if ye be dead with Christ from the rudiments of the world, *why, as though living in the world, are ye subject to ordinances?*" And as to a preference for days, the Apostle proposes the widest latitude, attesting every man in the church, not by the observance or non-observance of any especial day, but by the conscience of each individual. "Who art thou that judgest another man's servant? to his own master he standeth or falleth....One man esteemeth one day above another: another esteemeth every day alike. *Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind.* He that regardeth the day, regardeth it unto the Lord; and he that regardeth not the day, to the Lord he doth not regard

* Matth. xii. 5, 6.

† See Heylyn. See also a comprehensive and able article on Worship, in the *Freethinking Christian's Quarterly Register*, 1823.

it*.” And to the church at Galatia the Apostle is even more marked in relation to *the principle* of the utter worthlessness of this class of observances, in his fervid denunciation thereof: “How turn ye again to *the weak and beggarly elements*, whereunto ye desire again to be in bondage? *Ye observe days, and months, and times, and years.* · I am afraid of you, lest I have bestowed upon you labour in vain †.”

But the most important passage touching the present inquiry, and one which may be viewed as decisive in relation to apostolic authority, is addressed by Paul to the church at Colosse: “And you (Gentiles), being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he (Jesus) quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses; *blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, nailing it to his cross. . . .* Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of AN HOLYDAY, or of *the new moon*, or of THE SABBATH DAYS: *which are a shadow of things to come ‡.*” With such absolute testimony as the above, and so unequivocally applicable, *first*, to *the principle* of sabbatical or other ceremonial observance, and *secondly*, to the specific *fact* of such observance, how, consistently with ingenuousness and Scriptural knowledge, can the following, amidst a multitude of similar declarations, be adequately accounted for? “The duties of the Sabbath must be acknowledged to have been *left by Christ and his Apostles exactly as they found them*, and all declarations to the contrary must be regarded as merely gratuitous and *presumptive §.*”!!! But it is not merely the New Testament records which the American author and his party set at nought, for they alike pass by the ordinary sources of

* Romans xiv. 4—6.

† Galat. iv. 9—11.

‡ Coloss. ii. 13—17.

§ See Dwight, p. 82.

Biblical critical authority: thus, “St. Paul calls the Jewish ritual ‘the *shadow* of things to come,’ ‘figures,’ ‘antitypes,’ ‘*the whole law* a schoolmaster to bring us to Christ,’ ‘the elements of the world.’ The Jewish religion was perfect, in that it was suited to the situation and circumstances of the people to whom it was given; it was only imperfect, when compared with the more complete œconomy of the Gospel.” One cannot contemplate *the ceremonial law* without also reflecting on its *gradual abolition*; “but it became criminal to observe it after the destruction of Jerusalem, because it (*i. e.* the Jewish law) *could not then be legally observed*, since the temple and altar had been destroyed*.”

From the above collection of passages and of authorities, the following conclusions would seem to offer themselves:—

First, That, apart from specific appointment, all days being alike, the *selection* of any one, and its *separation* from the rest, can only be effected by a positive command; and that, when so appointed, it can be abolished or altered only by the institutor, or by his authority.

Secondly, That the Jewish Sabbath was divinely appointed; that its main purposes were not religious observances, but civil and political arrangements, commanded to be observed by the Jews, and therefore binding upon them whilst their national polity existed and they continued to be recognised as the peculiar people of God. They have ceased to be that people; their national existence is destroyed; and the Sabbath, together with their polity, have, as Divine institutions for present observance, passed away.

Thirdly, That whilst the command for the Jewish Sabbath is one of the Ten Commandments, it forms no part

* See Jennings’s *Jewish Antiquities*, p. 439; and Brown’s *Jewish Antiquities*, vol. ii.

of what is termed the moral law, but is mainly a civil and political, local and terminable institution; and neither is there any provision for its being “everlasting” or “perpetual” in any other or more extended sense, than the Feast of Tabernacles, the rite of circumcision, or any other of the Mosaic institutions.

Fourthly, That its observance *was* not and *is* not binding upon Gentiles as such; and that any view which should so apply it, would alike affix in principle the practice of the rite of circumcision, together with the whole of the Jewish ritual, upon the Gentiles; and further, that such Gentiles as desire to apply to the present times the Scriptural passages in relation to the Jewish Sabbath, should, without favour or affection, take the institution entire, and consistently adopt the *whole* of its provisions, alike as to the “*very day,*” and the making it an absolute rest for themselves, their cattle and their servants, and also as to the double sacrifice; for, as has been well observed, “one river is as good as another, one mountain as good as another, *except when there is a Divine command which specifies one,* and then it is our part *not to alter* or to question a Divine command, but to consider whether it extends to us, and if it does, to obey it*.”

Fifthly, That the conduct of Jesus and the declarations of Paul are directly averse to an especial reverence for the Sabbath, or any other ceremonial institution whatever, particularly in connexion with the worship of God; for “believe me, the hour cometh, when ye shall neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem, worship the Father. . . . The true worshipers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him. God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him *in spirit* (mind) and in truth †.” That God “that made

* Whately, pp. 9, 10.

† John iv. 21—24.

the world and all things therein, seeing that he is Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands; neither is worshiped with men's hands, as though he needed anything, seeing he giveth to all life, and breath, and all things*.'"

Sixthly, That neither Jesus nor the Apostles instituted another "Sabbath," or a "Lord's Day," or a "First Day," or a "*Christian Sabbath*," or any other day or season of any description, for sabbatical or any religious ceremonial or other outward observance.

Seventhly and finally, That there is no Scriptural warrant for the theory of Professor Lee†,—“That the *ancient Sabbath* had been sacred from the beginning, and had lost none of its primitive sanctions: That the Jewish Sabbath was an ‘*accommodation*’ to the times of the egress, of the ancient Sabbath: That the ancient Sabbath was resumed after the destruction of the Jewish polity; and therefore ‘there could be no necessity for any *new* commandment in the New Testament, again to sanction it for the future observance of the Church.’”

Why did not the Patriarchs observe the “ancient Sabbath,” and obey its “*primitive sanctions*”? Why had *Moses* to *establish* the Sabbath? How can it be accounted for, on the part of the Messiah and of Paul, that in *their* marked disregard of the then existing Sabbath, they make no reference to the “*ancient Sabbath*,” or of its having been “*accommodated* to the times of the egress,” and *resumed* in their days with its “*primitive sanctions*.”? And where, in the Scriptures, can the *institution* of the “ancient Sabbath” be found? !!!

* Acts xvii. 24, 25.

† See *Sermon on the Duty of observing the Christian Sabbath*, by S. Lee, D.D., Regius Professor, Cambridge, 1833, p. 44.

CHAPTER III.

THE LORD'S DAY, OR CHRISTIAN SABBATH.*

THIS portion of the controversy ought to lie within a very small compass, as the question to be determined is simply one of fact;—Did Jesus, or did he not,—did the Apostles, or did they not, *command* the observance of a Sabbath or any other positive civil or religious ceremonial institution? If they did, let the law and the testimony be produced, and let such law and such testimony be as distinct as the testimony of Moses in relation to the Jewish Sabbath, and also of the fourth commandment; these being excellent models,—excellent, because for a *positive institution* essentially necessary.

Any positive religious institution, and especially a Gospel institution of the class in debate, must be required to be as incapable of being misunderstood, or of being perverted, as those which appertained to the Hebrew constitution; indeed, from the novel circumstances in which the Gospel placed believers, and from the non-existence, in the *new* state of things, of a *national* distinctiveness, the necessity for precision as to the *authority* and all the details of observance would not be lessened, but, if possible, increased. With these preliminary views, a glance may suffice at the case, as put forth by the advocates for the “modern Sabbath”;—bearing in mind that this inquiry is *not* as to the *expediency* or the national benefits presumed to be derivable from a given portion of time being exempted from the usual occupations of society, but it is solely one *of fact and of Scriptural authority*.

* See Alban Butler's *Feasts and Fasts of the Catholic Church*.

The terms "the Sabbath," "Lord's Day," "First Day," and "Christian Sabbath," are commonly, but most disingenuously, used as convertible ones in this controversy. The phrase *Christian Sabbath*, like that of "Paradisaical Sabbath," is not Scriptural, the "Sabbath" of the Bible being *exclusively* the Jewish. Yet the unfairness or ignorance of some of the authorities in relation to the argument is not a little striking, who, whilst they do not pretend to contend for the *present* observance of the *Jewish Sabbath*, and also admit the scarcity of evidence as to the substitution of another, yet assume that the "Lord's Day" is binding, appropriating to its support the passages in the Old Testament which relate exclusively to the Jewish Sabbath and to the Jews whilst in Judea. Thus the Bishop of London* exhorts the citizens, to "sanctify the Lord's Day," to "keep holy *a Sabbath*," to avoid the "profanation of *the CHRISTIAN SABBATH*," "the sacred day *which both God and man have set apart* for religious worship and rest, and which is the grand bulwark of Christianity." And this is done, with, it should seem, a knowledge on the part of the bishop, that there is no *Christian Sabbath*; and that, whatever "*man*," or rather the bishop's Church, may have done, *God hath not set it apart* for "religious worship and rest;" for in Dr. Blomfield's Appendix he himself states, that "the 'Lord's Day' is a *more correct* and more Christian appellation of the first day of the week than the 'Sabbath.' And so far were the early Christians from terming it the Sabbath, that many of them kept holy *both* the Lord's Day and the Sabbath Day." And in the body of his pamphlet he adopts with marked approval the true and *honest* statement of Archbishop Sharp†:—"Though

* *A Letter on the present Neglect of the Lord's Day*; by C. J. Blomfield, D.D., Bishop of London. 1830.

† *Sermons*, vol. iii. p. 218.

there be no particular law of God that obligeth us Christians to observe one day in seven, more than one day in six or eight, . . . though there be no particular law of God in this matter, yet, since the Christians from the beginning took up this practice in imitation of the Jews, . . . and wherever Christianity hath obtained, it hath bound upon us by the laws both ecclesiastical and civil, to lay an obligation upon every man's conscience to observe this day.'*

Dr. Dwight, however, is even bolder than our metropolitan as it relates to Scriptural authority, making, as the following position will show, very short work of the kind of evidence which a sabbatical institution, designed for universal and perpetual observance, would, judging from the precision which was characteristic of the Jewish Sabbath, seem to demand:—“*The perpetual establishment of the Sabbath is evident from Revelations i. 10.†*” Will it be credited that the evidence which the Doctor appends to this assertion is this passage in the Revelations—“*I was in the spirit on the Lord's day*”? Here there is nothing said of a Sabbath; nothing *instituted*; *no command* of any kind for any object; *no appointment* of times, or seasons, or persons; nothing that relates even to the “*Lord's day*” being *an institution* for any purpose whatever; not an atom of evidence upon which to affix the *establishment*, perpetual or otherwise, of a Sabbath at all:—so that the zeal of the Transatlantic author has clearly outrun his discretion as well as his judgement and his evidence. The passage (the *only* one in the Bible in which “*the Lord's day*” occurs,) having been made of too much importance in this investigation, and by authorities of too high consideration, to be left without additional in-

* See Bishop of London's Pamphlet, p. 7, and Appendix.

† Dwight, p. 19.

vestigation, it may be well to attend still more closely to this, the prominent text in the controversy; and the fact that such writers as Whately and Paley affix to it a chief position in support of "*the Lord's Day*," tends much to prove the scantiness of Scriptural evidence in support of even their chastened and moderated views.

"At the time that St. John wrote the book of his Revelation, the first day of the week had obtained the name of the '*Lord's Day*.' 'I was in the spirit,' says he, 'on the Lord's Day,' which name, and St. John's use of it, sufficiently denote the appropriation of this day to the service of religion. . . . I make no doubt that by the Lord's Day was meant the first day of the week*."

Could even Paley's view be sustained, it would not prove that *another Sabbath* was *instituted*, or that a substitute for the Sabbath, under the designation of "the Lord's Day," was *divinely appointed*.

But to descend to the minor features in this case, how can the simple statement of John, that *he* was in the spirit on the Lord's day, denote any existing general appropriation of *the day* upon which that occurred, amongst believers, to what Paley calls "the *service* of religion"? Or by what secret communication could Paley entertain "*no doubt* that by the Lord's day was meant the first day"? In explanation of the term "Lord's day," the following suggestions are offered, with the remark, that should they be deemed unsatisfactory, still the argument remains untouched, that the "Lord's day" was not a Divine institution; neither was its observance *commanded* by Jesus or the Apostles, and consequently its observance by believers cannot be binding in reference to such authority.

The "Lord's day,"—is it not equivalent to what in other

* Paley, vol. ii. p. 268.

passages is called “the day of the Lord,”—that is, the day, or time, or period, when the Messiah, agreeably to the prophecies, shall again appear upon earth, in power and great glory? The words occur at the commencement of John’s relation of the Revelation, which had been communicated by Jesus to him whilst John was in the Isle of Patmos, of the particulars of the future dealing of God with man; and in which, occurrences at the distance of many ages are related as then existing,—things that are not, being spoken of as things that are. Thus, his being “in the *spirit* on the Lord’s day,”—was it not his being made acquainted (*i. e.* being carried in his *mind* onward to *the day of the Lord*,) in relation to the “determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God”—when the day or period (which John describes in the subsequent chapters,) would occur, when the faithful should live and reign with the Lord for a thousand years, and over whom the second death was to have no power?

This view seems to receive support from the connecting verses. It was “the *Revelation* of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him, to shew unto his servants *things which must shortly come to pass*; and he sent and signified it by his angel [messenger] unto his servant John: who bare record of the word of God, and of the testimony of Jesus Christ, and of all things that he saw. . . . Behold, he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him: and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him*.” And, “*I was in the spirit on the Lord’s day*, and heard behind me a great voice, as of a trumpet, saying, I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last†,” &c. Thus showing that the whole is connected with the *second* coming of Jesus, and that the “Lord’s day” is “the day or period of the coming of the Lord,” when he cometh

* Rev. i. 1, 2, 7.

† *Ibid.* 10, 11.

with clouds and when every eye shall see him,—and not the particular day upon which John received the Revelation; although, had it so been, it could not have the most distant connexion with establishing any institution, whether for rest or for religious observance. In further confirmation of this view, see the following passages:—“Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful *day of the Lord**.” “Ye have acknowledged us in part, that we are your rejoicing, even as ye also are ours in *the day of the Lord Jesus* †.” “For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first. . . . But of the times and the seasons, brethren, ye have no need that I write unto you. For yourselves know perfectly that *the day of the Lord* so cometh as a thief in the night ‡.”

THE “FIRST DAY.”—“I make no doubt,” says Paley, “that by the Lord’s Day was meant the *first day* of the week.” And this opinion is a prevalent one amongst that class of theologians who correctly renounce all claims to the perpetuity or present applicability of the Jewish Sabbath, but yet hold to the doctrine of the Scriptural recognition of a substitute for that Sabbath, in the first day of the week being *set apart* for religious worship. Upon the presumption that the preceding view of “*the Lord’s day*” is the right one, Paley’s assertion is wholly groundless; but even if otherwise, there is not the slightest evidence, from that solitary passage in the Revelations, to show that by “the Lord’s day” John meant the first day of the week, or, the converse, that in either or in the whole of these passages in which the words “first day” occur, the several writers thereof meant the Lord’s Day: and in order

* Mal. iv. 5.

† 2 Cor. i. 14.

‡ 1 Thess. iv. 16. & v. 1, 2.

fairly to estimate the bearing and the importance in the controversy of sustaining this position, the passages, together with their connexion, are submitted.

John relates that after the crucifixion of Jesus, Mary Magdalen on “the *first day*” of the week visited the sepulchre, and found that the stone had been removed therefrom. Subsequently she saw and conversed with Jesus, who on the evening of the same day, “being the FIRST DAY of the week, stood in the midst of his disciples, and said, Peace be unto you.” These disciples were Jews; *their Sabbath was the seventh day*;—did Jesus, in the above verse, substitute the first day for the seventh day? Is there in it any command for *any* day being set apart? Has the passage any one feature of being a positive institution? Jesus also showed himself to his disciples at the sea of Tiberias, and was likewise seen of his disciples for *forty* days after his resurrection, and before his ascension; and whilst such a period would seem to be not unfitting for the resumption of *old*, or the appointment of *new* positive ceremonial institutions, if there were to be any, either then or in perpetuity,—we are left in total darkness in relation thereto; being informed by the historian,—not that Jesus commanded to be set apart “the First Day,” or “the Lord’s Day,” or “the Christian Sabbath,” or that “the *primitive* Sabbath” was to be resumed*,—but that for the forty days which he was with them he was teaching and “*speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God*”: so that Paley, notwithstanding the importance to his case of his view being sustained, may well, in relation to this passage, say that this appearance of Jesus, “for anything that appears in the account, *might, as to the day, have been accidental*; but,”

* See Professor Lee’s *Sermon*. See also Alban Butler’s *Moveable Feasts and Fasts of the Catholic Church*.

continues he, “in the 26th verse of the same chapter (John xx.), we read, that after eight days, that is, on the first day of the week following again, the disciples were within; which second meeting upon the same day of the week *looks like* an appointment and design to meet on that particular day*.” Now what does the 26th verse contain? “And *after* eight days again his disciples were within, and Thomas with them: then came Jesus, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst, and said, Peace be unto you.”!!!

Does this verse strengthen the case? Where, in the above, is *the command*? Where *the institution*? Where the recognition, on the part either of the Apostles or of Jesus, of any existing positive institution at all on the first day? Where the evidence upon which the Bishop of London (p. 96,) asserts that amongst the authorities “to keep holy a Sabbath or Lord’s Day,” is the “*uniform practice of the Church of Christ, even from the death of its divine founder, and before his ascension into glory*”?

Seeing that Jesus did *not* institute a new Sabbath, or *resume* any old institution, or order the sanctification of any other day for especial religious ceremonial observance, the single passage in the Acts, and the corresponding one in the Corinthians, are the *only* passages, in addition to the foregoing, which are adduced under this head; and they next require examination.

From the peculiar position in which the Apostolic Church was placed, it would appear that for a period the believers had all things in common; and that, from being thus temporarily situated, it should seem there originated the *Agapæ*, or feasts of love; and that officers, *i. e.* deacons and deaconesses, superintended the manage-

* Paley’s *Political and Moral Philosophy*, vol. ii. p. 267.

ment thereof. Paul having sailed from Philippi, after the days of unleavened bread, came unto them to Troas in five days, where he abode seven days; and “upon the *first day* of the week, when the *disciples came together to break bread*, he preached unto them, ready to depart on the morrow, and continued his speech until midnight:” thus, availing himself of the occasion of *their common meal*, when they would be likely to be assembled in the greatest number, to impart to them instruction previously to his departure. To the Corinthians he advises the *time* for collecting for these objects, and thus states his reason for so directing the Church: “Concerning *the collection for the saints*, as I have given order to the churches of Galatia, even so do ye. *Upon the first day of the week* let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him, *that there be no gatherings when I come*. And when I come, whomsoever ye shall approve by your letters, them will I send *to bring your liberality unto Jerusalem*.*.”

Whilst the excellency, and appropriateness to the peculiar circumstances in which the believers were then placed, of these simple and benevolent arrangements is obvious, it is in vain to look to these passages—and no others are adduced—for any new positive ceremonial institution appertaining to the Gospel œconomy: there is here nothing in relation to the *first* day which should mark it out, as instituted, from the *third*, or the *eighth*, or any other day of the week, there being no command,—*no setting apart*,—no evidence of its being an existing institution; and it is difficult to account for the assertion of a writer so candid and so enlightened as Dr. Whately, in relation to these passages, that “there are indeed sufficiently

* See 1 Cor. xvi. 1—3.

plain marks of the early Christians having observed the Lord's Day *as a religious festival* even from the very resurrection : John xx. 19, 26; Acts, xx. 7; 1 Cor. xvi. 2; Rev. i. 10.*”

If by *the early Christians* the believers during the Apostolic days are meant, it is tolerably apparent that the “marks” exist not in the passages quoted, neither do they in any other portion of the New Testament: and Paley, whilst labouring to support the same hypothesis as the above, makes the following admission;—“Nor did Christ or his Apostles deliver, *that we know of, any command to their disciples* of the discontinuance upon that day (Lord's Day) of the common offices of their professions †.” But if by the designation “early Christians” it is intended to refer us to those of the third or fourth centuries, when but little of the Gospel remained, then doubtless there are but too visible “marks” of the wide-spread corruption of Revelation in doctrine, as well as in discipline and in institutions; and not only was the Lord's Day observed, but, by some, the Jewish Sabbath in addition thereto; and eventually the edict of Constantine imparted to it an admixture of heathenism, by establishing the weekly festival of *Sunday* as the municipal law of the Roman empire ‡. But if Dr. Whately has ventured upon an untenable position as to these “marks” of the early Christians, he has most unanswerably met the reasoners of Dr. Dwight's class, and also of some of his own Church, touching such other portions of this controversy as go to maintain that we can apply certain portions of the Jewish Sabbath to ourselves; that we can *alter* the day from the seventh to

* p. 11.

† Paley, ii. 268.

‡ See Alban Butler's *Observances of the Catholic Church*; Archbishop Syngé's *Divine Authority of Church Government*; Bishop White *On the Sabbath*; and Bishop Pearson *On the Creed*.

the first, or to any other day; and that we are to avail ourselves of tradition.

"In saying," says Dr. Whately, "that there is no mention of the Lord's Day in the Mosaic law, I mean that there is no mention of that specific festival which Christians observe on the *first day* of the week; but there is not, as has sometimes been incautiously stated, any injunction to sanctify *one day in seven*: it is not keeping holy *some one day* in every seven, but *the seventh day*. Now surely it is presumptuous to say that we are at liberty to *alter* a Divine command. One of the recorded offences of Jeroboam was his instituting a feast unto the Lord on the fifteenth of the tenth month, *even the day that he had devised of his own heart.*"—It is not merely that the Apostles left no command perpetuating the observance of the Sabbath, and transferring the day from the seventh to the first,—since an express Divine command can be abrogated or altered only by the same power and by the same distinct revelation by which it was delivered,—but not only is there no such Apostolic *injunction*,—than which nothing less would be sufficient,—there is not even any *tradition* of such a change having been made; nay, more, it is even abundantly plain that they made no such change; and Heylyn, in the headings to one of his chapters, thus simply and truly places this portion of the investigation:—

"1. That there is nothing found in Scripture touching the keeping of the Lord's Day."

"2. Preparatives unto the dissolution of the Sabbath by our Saviour Christ."

"3. The Lord's Day not enjoined in the place thereof, either by Christ or his Apostles; but instituted by the authority of the Church."

"4. Our Saviour's resurrection on the '*first day*' of

the week, and his appearance on the same, make it not a Sabbath.”

“5. The first day of the week not made more than other (*i. e.* days) a Sabbath by Saint Peter, Saint Paul, or any other of the Apostles.”

“6. The preaching of St. Paul at Troas upon the first day of the week, no argument that there that day was set apart by the Apostles for religious exercises: collections* on the first day of the week conclude as little for that purpose†.”

“The Lord’s Day‡ was not advanced to that esteem which it now enjoys but *leisurely* and *by degrees*, partly by canons of particular councils, and partly by *the decretals of several Popes* and orders of several inferior prelates.”

Having concluded that which may be deemed the *direct* Scriptural evidence touching, 1. The Paradiſaical Sabbath; 2. The Jewish Sabbath; 3. The Christian Sabbath, or Lord’s Day, the points which remain have necessarily a very diminished degree of interest; and, but for the authorities from whom they emanate, need hardly be embodied in an investigation, the essential features of which are as to the existence or non-existence of *direct* Scriptural facts and *specific Divine authority*. Paley§ asserts that the “conclusion from the whole inquiry is this: The *assembling* upon the first day of the week for the purposes of public worship and religious instruction is a *law* of Christianity of *Divine* appointment: the *resting* on that day from our employments longer than we are detained by attendance upon these assemblies is to Christians an ordinance of *human* institution, *binding* nevertheless

* 1 Cor. xvi. 1.

† Heylyn.

‡ See Heylyn, p. 400.

§ vol. ii. p. 269.

upon the *conscience of every individual* of a country in which a weekly Sabbath is established." This passage is singularly inconsistent with the apparent design, and with the facts also of Paley's own Essay. If it is a *law* of Christianity and of *Divine appointment* too, the citing of that law would supersede the whole of Paley's reasoning as to the *expediency* of its religious and civil benefits. *Where is the law?* where *the Divine appointment* of any Sabbath excepting the Jewish? and *that* Paley has himself shown is not *now* binding either "as to the day, the duties, or the penalties." It would be extremely difficult to reconcile the above passage with the tenor of this author's Essay, but for his situation in the national church, and doubtless a desire to work out with Scriptural authority, if possible, the position that the institution of a weekly Sabbath is so connected with the functions of civil life, and requires so much of civil law in its regulation and support, that "it cannot perhaps properly be *made the ordinance* of any religion, *till that religion be received as the religion of the State*"! It might be satisfactory to have Dr. Dwight's view of this position; he, as an American, not having the privilege of living in a country which, according to Paley, is fitted to have the Sabbath, as an ordinance of religion, established therein,—the Doctor's nation not being blessed with a State religion. "But Christian ministers have no right, even should they think it expedient, to encourage or tacitly connive at *misconceptions* on the subject*."

The Archbishop of Dublin takes another ground. He, in common with Paley, having demonstrated that the passage in Genesis does not contain any institution, and that for the present observance of the Jewish Sabbath there is no authority, yet for the purpose of sustaining the pre-

* See Whately, p. 24.

sent Sabbath or "Lord's Day," and as the "most effectual as well as the only justifiable means for accomplishing this object," desires to place this duty on its "TRUE foundation*"; this "true" foundation, as developed by the Archbishop, being "*the power of the Church bestowed by Christ himself,—which would alone be amply sufficient to sanction and enforce the observance, even independent of Apostolic example and ancient usage.*" The law and the testimony are here, as in Paley's case, alike wanting. What is this power, which was thus independent of Apostolic example? When was it bestowed, and upon what Church? The *then* Church (the Church of God), or *any* church or assembly in any subsequent age? And for what specific purposes?—In another page the Archbishop solves some of the points of these inquiries. "The Apostles and their successors, *even the Church*, which he promised to be with 'always, even unto the end of the world,' were endued with ample power to enact regulations, with a view to Christian edification; and among the rest to set apart festival days, such as the *Lord's Day, Christmas Day, Good Friday, Holy Thursday, &c.*†"

Was not this *promise* made to the Apostles, not to establish ceremonial institutions, but to be with *them* until the end of the world, *i. e.* the end of *the age*,—that age, the *then* Apostolic age? But where is the evidence that even to the Apostles the power was given of "setting apart" *festive days*, as before cited? Where is the instance of *their* having ever exercised that power? And if given, were they to use it by the appointment, "for Christian edification," of "Good Friday, Holy Thursday," &c., or were the Apostles to disregard, by the non-appointment of these festivals, the authority of their master; and that, too, when

* See Advertisement to Dr. Whately's Pamphlet.

† See Whately, pp. 7, 21.

they, the Apostles, in their *peculiar* office and duties, had no successors, not even “*the Church of God*”?

But the Archbishop proceeds: “Now to such persons (*i. e.* strenuous advocates for the observance of the Lord’s Day,) it is very useful to show that *an institution*, which they would be very unwilling to see deprived of all *Divine sanction*, can derive *such* sanction from *no other source* than from the power conferred by Christ on *every* Christian Church*.”! If *every* “*Christian*” Church is thus possessed of such power, can each mould and form it agreeably to their own conceptions? And if so, may we not have a different and an opposing version from the Catholic, the Greek, and each of the numerous Protestant Churches?—and all this variety as to an assumed sacred and positive institution, the observance of which is held to be binding upon all. In evidence of how differently the positive institutions which really had the “*Divine sanction*” were enacted, there cannot be a better illustration than is furnished by a reference to the Jewish Sabbath; and in relation to which, its duties and its penalties could not admit of mistake or allow of variation.

The late Christian Advocate of Cambridge (the Rev. T. S. Hughes), differing from both the preceding authors as to the Paradisaical Sabbath, but agreeing with them as to the non-existence of Divine authority for the present observance of the Jewish Sabbath, thus proposes his theory for the strict observance of a Sabbath Day; adopting, in common with several high authorities, and in addition to his advocacy of the present and universal applicability of the passage in Genesis, the somewhat puerile and antiquated argument drawn from the peculiarity of the number seven. Thus, “*Seven* days were allowed to Noah for collecting the animals into his ark;

* Whately, p. 28.

seven days did that patriarch stay, and again other *seven* days he sent out the dove. Laban proposed to Jacob the service of *seven* years. Joseph mourned for his father *seven* days; and a *seven days'* fast was observed by those who interred the bones of Saul. *Seven* bulls and *seven* rams were offered up as a burnt-offering; *seven* altars built by Balaam; and the number seven was held in equal reverence by the Pythagoreans and other philosophical sects*." And if this order of reasoning be legitimate to prove the existence of a Divine institution commanded to be of universal observance, the Reverend author, who is not singular † in this view, might have much extended this train of thought thus:—Philo so highly esteemed the number seven, that he considered there was not any man able sufficiently to extol it! Hippocrates divided the life of man into *seven* ages, each age containing *seven* years; the Pleiades consist of *seven* stars; the moon quartereth every *seventh* day; infants born in the *seventh* month may live; and some deem the *seventh* to be the critical day in most kinds of maladies!!!—But these discoveries as to the virtues to be extracted from the number seven, were much exceeded in nicety of discrimination and ceremonial allotment by certain of the Rabbis as to the Jewish Sabbath. On Friday they pared their nails and whetted their knives, in readiness for the reception of the Sabbath. They taught that on the Sabbath a horse may have a bridle or a halter to lead, but not a saddle to load him; a tailor must not wear his needle in his sleeve on the Sabbath Day; the lame may use a staff, but the blind may not; they must not rub their shoes on the ground, but against a wall; and if a flea bite on the Sabbath, they might remove it, but not

* See Hughes's *Letter to Higgins*, 1826, p. 12—14.

† See King's *Morsels of Criticism*, 8vo edition.

kill it, but a louse they might kill ;—together with sundry other marvellous niceties, being akin in principle to certain of their Christian fellow-labourers, even after the Protestant *Reformation*, and in this country. Thus it was preached in Oxfordshire, that to do any servile work or business on the *Lord’s Day*, was as great a sin as to kill a man or to commit adultery. In Norfolk it was taught, that to make a feast or dress a wedding-dinner on the *Lord’s Day*, was as great a sin as for a father to take a knife and cut his child’s throat. In Suffolk it was preached, that to ring more bells than one on the *Lord’s Day*, was as great a sin as to commit murder!!! These extremes, however, as to the observance of what was called “the *New Lord’s Day Sabbath*,” induced a species of reaction, which was led by the very remarkable Royal Declaration, in which King James enacts, “That for his good people’s lawful recreations his pleasure was, that after the end of divine service they should not be disturbed, letted, or discouraged from any lawful recreations, such as dancing for either men or women, archery for men, leaping, vaulting, nor any such harmless recreations, so as that the same be had in due time, without impediment or let of divine service. Given at the Court at Greenwich, May 24, 1618.” The *unlawful* games on Sundays were bear- and bull-baiting, interludes, and bowling, *by the meaner sort*.

The bishops, in the 12th of Elizabeth, provided a Bill for enforcing the observation of the “*Lord’s Day*,” and divers Bills were introduced into the legislature for the like purpose, especially one in the 27th of Elizabeth, entitled, “A Bill for the better and more reverend observing of the *Sabbath Day* :” it passed both houses, after much debating, but was denied the Royal assent. During the reigns of the Charleses several attempts of the same

kind were made, the last of which, when about to receive the Royal assent, was stolen and not afterwards recovered.

The Lord's Day in English law is a civil as well as a religious institution, the forfeitures and penalties not extending to the prohibiting the dressing of meat in families, or dressing or selling of meat in inns, cook-shops, or victualling-houses; nor to the selling of milk before nine o'clock in the morning or after four in the afternoon, or the selling of mackerel before or after "divine service." And in the case of an information against a magistrate for refusing to proceed upon an information against a baker who baked puddings and pies on Sunday, the Court held that it was not an offence within the Act, it being *a work of necessity*, and that it was better that one baker and his men should stay at home, than many families and servants*. And amongst the nice distinctions drawn as to the Lord's Day, the following case from our law books may serve as an example. The plaintiff lived a mile from the church; and going thither with his lady in his coach upon a Sunday, he was robbed, and, upon instituting an action against the hundred, recovered, the statute extending only to the case of *travelling*. Chief-Justice Pratt held, that if they had been robbed *not* going to church, but to make *visits*, they might not so have recovered.

From Hesiod we learn that the heathens celebrated the *seventh* day of the month; and that the *first* of the month was consecrated to Apollo, the *fourth* to Mercury, the *seventh* again to Apollo, and the *eighth* to Theseus. And Constantine, in embodying and nationalizing the unholy work of infusing heathenism into the doctrines of Reve-

* See "LORD'S DAY" in Burn's *Ecclesiastical Law*, vol. ii. p. 414.

lation, not only established *Sunday*, but also enjoined equally a *rest* upon *Friday*, and commanded them to be alike honoured, the one being “the day of our Redeemer’s resurrection, the other that of his passion.” He also established a variety of other festivals, in relation to which Heylyn innocently remarks*: “Nor did this *pious* prince confirm and regulate the *Lord’s Day* only, but *unto him we are indebted for many of those other festivals which have been since observed in the Church of God!*” When the Church was at perfect peace, it pleased the emperor to signify to all his deputies and lieutenants in the Roman empire, that they should have a care to see those memorials of *the martyrs* duly honoured, and solemnize times or festivals to be appointed to that end in the churches; and such of them as had been most eminent, as the Apostles and Evangelists, “St. Peter, St. Thomas, St. Paul, &c., were universally received and celebrated *even as now they are, (and) as they are now observed in the Church of England*†.”

Sunday † was dedicated by the heathens to the honour of the sun; and it has been suggested, as the sun was called *Dominus Sol*, that the day appointed thereto was in the same way entitled *Dies Dominica*. The Persians named their god, the sun, *Mithra*, the *Lord Mithra*; and Porphyry, in his prayer to the sun, calls him *Dominus Sol*; and most of the ancient nations gave the sun the epithet *Lord*, or *Master*, or some title equivalent thereto, as *Ku-rios* in Greek, and *Dominus* in Latin§. But be the suggestions in this paragraph as they may, in concluding

* See Selden, *De Jure Naturali et Gentium*, and also Thomas Aquinas.

† Heylyn, p. 425.

‡ The names assigned to the several days of the week may be traced to the earliest periods of Egyptian, Chaldean and Persian history.

§ See the *Horæ Sabbaticæ*, and also a note in the *Modern Sabbath Examined*, p. 108. See also Professor Lee’s *Sermon*, p. 36.

this argument, it may be safely held from the facts detailed, and the conclusions arising therefrom, that there is no Scriptural authority whatever for the present observance of the seventh, or the first, or any other day, as an institution set apart by Divine authority, and commanded either for partial or universal observance; and that the Lord's Day, as it is called, is, in common with the minor Church festivals, mainly of heathen original, and without any religious claim upon the believers in Divine Revelation.

“THE HEAVENS DECLARE THE GLORY OF GOD; AND THE FIRMAMENT SHOWETH *HIS* HANDYWORK. . . . THERE IS NO SPEECH NOR LANGUAGE, WHERE *THEIR* VOICE IS NOT HEARD. . . . IN *THEM* HATH HE SET A TABERNACLE FOR THE SUN*.”

* Psalm xix. 1, 3, 4.

CHAPTER IV.

A NATIONAL SABBATH.

THE *expediency* of a periodical national day of rest, established by the legislature, as a purely *civil* institution, is a subject of much interest, presenting as it does many weighty considerations to the political œconomist as well as to the moralist and the purely religious inquirer: and these considerations press with increased force from the admission of the preceding facts, that there is no Scriptural command for the present sanctification of any day whatever.

It would probably be difficult to select any large community by whom *a day of rest* could be more needed than by the inhabitants of London, subject as all classes therein are to the constant wear and tear of body and of mind, induced by their local position, by the ever-active competition arising out of the concentration of knowledge, of capital, of skill, and of the density and extent of the population, and also the pressure of the public burthens. But then, as has been well stated by Dr. Whately, although in support of a conclusion differing from that which is now submitted, "I am convinced that the most effectual, as well as the *only justifiable means* for accomplishing this object (the observance of a day of rest,) will be found in the placing this duty on its TRUE foundation." And hence might we not look to the legislature for such regulations in relation to it, as should preserve us from a violation of our personal liberties, and protect us from the puritanical

ferocity of spiritual aggression, and the partial legislation of the gloomy, the ill-informed, the fanatical, or the pharisaical?

An abstinence from our usual occupations being insured as a political institution, might not the *mode* of the observance be very safely left to the free choice of the people, when relieved from arbitrary and partial spiritual interdiction and denunciation, and false and impracticable views of religious obligation?

Must it necessarily follow, that on such a day recreation and pleasure and enjoyment should be injurious to the public weal, or calculated to lower the national tone of religious and moral feeling*? Would not religious communities assemble then, as now? Would the believers in the strict perpetuity of the Sabbath forgo their creed, or would they not continue to act and to believe in a similar manner to that in which Dr. Adam Clarke thus records his parents to have done?

“Every Lord’s Day was strictly sanctified: no manner of work was done in the family, and the children were taught from their earliest youth to sanctify the Sabbath. On that day she (Dr. Clarke’s mother, a presbyterian,) took the opportunity to catechize and instruct her children,

* In the year 1829 the author passed through Edgeworth’s Town, and was informed by Mr. Edgeworth, that as a means of improving the habits, and of contributing towards the innocent enjoyment of the people, he had appointed certain of the boys in his public school to entertain the people with musical performances on the Sundays, *after* the hours of service at the Catholic chapel: the *result*, in weaning the people from the whiskey-shops, (with which even Edgeworth’s Town abounds,) was highly satisfactory; but cant and mistaken views of religious obligation interfered, and induced Mr. Edgeworth to forgo his enlightened and rational, and comparatively moral, arrangements for the benefit of his poorer countrymen: the music ceased, and the saints and the whiskey-shops again triumphed!

would read a chapter, sing a portion of a psalm, and then go to prayer*.”

And would not a more enlightened class of believers still *avail* themselves of such a day of rest, somewhat in accordance with the interesting picture thus drawn, by an admirable female writer of the present day, of a religious emigrant family buried in the American forests, yet continuing to cultivate, under the direction of Dr. Sneyd, all their former scientific and moral and religious tastes †? “But do you not find it pleasanter to go to worship, as we went this morning, through green pastures, and by still waters, where human industry made its appeal to us in eloquent silence, and men’s dwellings bore entire the aspect of sabbath repose, than to pass through paved streets with a horizon of brick walls, and tokens on every side not only of week-day labour, but of struggles for subsistence and subservience for bread? There may be more immediate pleasure in one sabbath walk than another, Arthur, but they yield perhaps equally the aliment of piety. Whatever indicates the condition of man, points out not only the species of duty owing to man, but the species of homage due to God,—the character of the petitions appropriate to the season. All the methods of going to worship may serve the purpose of preparation for the sanctuary. The nobleman may lean back in his carriage to meditate; the priest may stalk along in reverie, unconscious of all around him; the citizen father may look with pride on the train of little ones

* *Life of Adam Clarke, LL.D.*, vol. i. 1833.

† *Illustrations of Political Economy*, No. XXIII., “Briery Creek,” by Harriet Martineau. The character of Dr. Sneyd has apparently been sketched from the pursuits, condition and views of the late Dr. Priestley whilst banished to America by the ignorance and ferocity of his countrymen, acting under and excited by a barbarous and wicked Tory Government.

with whom he may spend the *leisure* of this day; and the observing philanthropist may go forth early and see a thousand instances by the way; and all may alike enter the church door with raised and softened hearts, . . . and all listen with equal faith to the promise of peace on earth and good will to men. . . . Yes, and the observer not the least, *if he observe for holy purposes.*"

Might not literary and scientific societies be greatly extended, and amongst *all* classes, down to the very poorest; and, by their members assembling on this day, with a consciousness that in so doing they were violating neither a human nor a divine law, greatly tend to increase the knowledge, the morality, and the consequent civilization and religion and happiness of the people? And why should not the British Museum, the National Gallery (when we have one), and other public institutions, be open to the people on Sundays? And would not such cultivation of the public mind tend to wean one class from social pursuits of an injurious tendency, and others from secluded and profitless self-gratification?

Would not *such* a day of rest tend to relieve religion from the imputations which the conduct of certain of its privileged professors in high places tends to affix to it, by their busy interference with the poor man's Sunday occupations* (often of necessity and not of choice,) and amusements, and their non-interference with the Sunday pursuits, the entertainments, and the pleasures of the rich and powerful †?

* "I must appear important, big as a country pedagogue; . . . I'll swell like a shirt bleaching in a high wind, and look burly as a *Sunday beadle*, when he has kicked down the *unhallowed stall* of a *profane* old apple woman."—Tobin's *Honeymoon*, Act III.

† The present Bishop of London recently interdicted the performance of "*sacred music*" in public rooms on a Sunday evening. Does Dr. Blomfield ever accept an invitation to Windsor on Sundays? or has

Can it be beneficial to society, or tend to check the perpetration of crime, that the walls of our prison-cells should be pasted over with absurd tales, and statements of the *conversions* of criminals, who are made to centre the cause of all their evil propensities, and wicked habits, and vile associations, in the fact of their having been first tempted of *the devil* to become *Sabbath-breakers*?

Can the present *unsettled* manner of estimating Sunday, and of the various modes of observing it, be conducive to the advancement of religion or the benefit of society? for, not to dwell upon the opposing practices amongst the European continental nations, and those of the Greek, and Catholic, and Protestant communities, the test of soundness in the Sabbatical faith is very variable, even under the same national government and in nearly the same district of country. Thus in some of the southern counties of Ireland the song and the dance are Sunday afternoon occupations, whilst amongst certain of the northern inhabitants of the same island an almost pharisaical attention to Sunday exists. Throughout Scotland, public conveyances proceed only on the six "*lawful days*,"—

he suggested to His Majesty, as the head of the Church, the profanation of reviewing the troops on Sunday mornings, and of allowing the military bands on the terrace and in the gardens to play on Sunday evenings? although such occupations doubtless contribute towards the enjoyment of the public, and evince the liberal and kindly feelings of the King.

A party, upon being conducted on a Sunday through the interior of Windsor Castle, remarked to the attendant, whilst looking at the kitchen, upon the great *activity* then pervading that interesting department of the royal residence; the reply was, "Our very busiest day, Sir, is Sunday." What is Dr. Blomfield's opinion, in *this case*, of the Jewish command, "The seventh day is the sabbath of the Lord thy God: in it thou shalt *not do any work, . . . nor thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thine ox, nor thine ass, nor any of thy cattle; . . . that thy manservant and thy maidservant may rest as well as thou.*"?

with, however, such exceptions as the following. Stages do not travel on Sunday, but the *mail* does. The man in middling circumstances cannot hire a pleasure horse on Sunday, but the man of fortune travelling in his own carriage may do so. The Scotch smacks and steam-boats do *not* leave Leith for London on Sunday, but they *do* leave London for Leith on that day. The Scotch shopkeepers on their route to the metropolis are said to have two consciences; they will not proceed on their journey on Sunday whilst *in* Scotland, but when across the border their scruples so far give way as to allow them readily to avail themselves of the facilities of English travelling; and upon the occasion of the visit of George IV. to Edinburgh, all the public stages, and every variety of vehicle, plied for hire on Sunday!!!

In the United States also there are similar inconsistencies. Thus, whilst at Boston, the author was proceeding on a Sunday to the village of Quincy, and his conductor had to exercise all his ingenuity and his local knowledge to be enabled to effect, through the back lanes and by-paths, an *escape* out of the town of Boston, lest he should have been even *seen*, "upon the Sabbath Day," other than on his way to church. At New York, although a city not deemed to be righteous overmuch, chains are placed across all the main thoroughfares; whilst, under the same Government, at New Orleans, the stores, markets, theatres, gambling-houses, and ball-rooms are open on Sunday; and the parties reputed the most ready to fall into the extremes of this southern capital, are said to be the puritanical emigrants from New England!

Can these things accord with the great truths of Revelation, or be conducive to a healthy state of the public morals? Their results, indeed, may be successful in manufacturing hypocrites, but must be inimical to the fostering

of religious principle or the cultivating mental integrity. And as to the pharisaical and aristocratical tenet, that the "lower orders" may abuse the freedom which an entire day in seven would confer upon them, it may be replied, that they have that day now; that, despite of the presumed sanctity of the day, they are still accused of its violation; and also that, generally, holydays are misused by them. Robinson of Cambridge has, however, quaintly but well remarked, "As to holydays, let the poor take as many as they can afford and their masters can spare;.... far be it from us to wish to abridge their liberty, or diminish their little enjoyment of life; but let us not make religion of their gambols, *nor enrol their pastimes among the laws of Jesus Christ**." And to all classes, whether in relation to an observance of the Sabbath, or any other religious festival, the sentiments in another work of the same author may not be unprofitably studied; for, "let the rites of Judaism be what they may, Christians are not bound to perform them because they were instituted by Moses;....but it must be proved that Jesus, his successor and a legislator like him, hath *re-ordained* them. Jewish ceremonies are to be considered now only as Pagan rites are considered, namely, histories of past ages, *but not as laws of the present times*†." And being convinced that Jesus has *not* re-ordained either these or any other ceremonial observances, we may finish this investigation, and contemplate man thus described by the philosopher, and the duties of man thus proclaimed by the prophet:—

"The beauty and permanency of the heavens, and the principle of conservation belonging to the system of the universe, the works of the eternal and divine Architect,

* *History and Mystery of Good Friday*, by Robert Robinson, p. 25.

† Robinson's *History of Baptism*, (American edition,) p. 31.

were finely opposed to the perishing and degraded works of man" (*i. e.* the ruins at Rome,) "in his most active and powerful state; and at this moment so humble appeared to me the condition of the most exalted beings belonging to the earth, so feeble their combinations, so minute the point of space and so limited the period of time in which they act, that I could hardly avoid comparing the generations of man, and the effects of his genius and power, to the swarms of luceoli or fire-flies which were dancing around me, and that appeared flitting and sparkling amidst the gloom and darkness of the ruins, but which were no longer visible when they rose above the horizon, their feeble light being utterly obscured in the brightness of the moonbeams in the heavens*."

"WILL THE LORD BE PLEASED WITH THOUSANDS OF RAMS, OR WITH TEN THOUSANDS OF RIVERS OF OIL?.... HE HATH SHOWED THEE, O MAN, WHAT IS GOOD; AND WHAT DOETH THE LORD REQUIRE OF THEE, BUT TO DO JUSTLY, AND TO LOVE MERCY, AND TO WALK HUMBLY WITH THY GOD †?"

* Sir Humphry Davy's *Consolations in Travel*, 1830, p. 13.

† Micah vi. 7, 8.

THE END.



